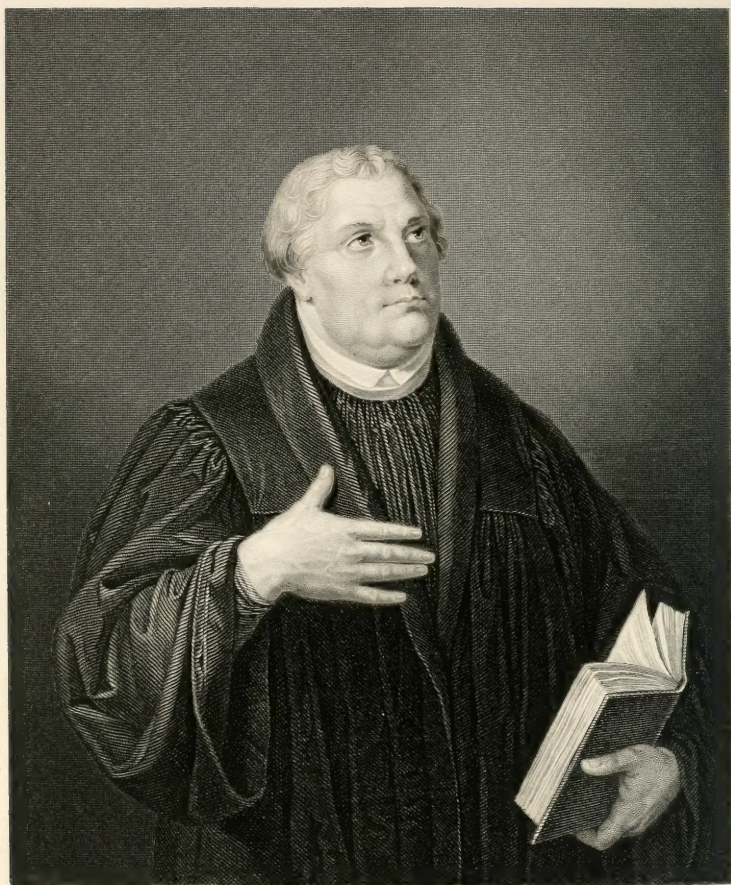




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HISTORY
OF THE
REFORMATION
IN THE
Sixteenth Century.

BY THE REV^d

J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNE, D.D.

VOL. I.



GUSTAV KONIG.

S. GREATBACH.

LUTHER BURNING THE POPE'S BULL.

WITTEMBERG. 9 A.M.—10TH DECEMBER 1520.

HISTORY
OF THE
REFORMATION
IN THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BY J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNÉ,
PRESIDENT OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, GENEVA, AND MEMBER OF THE SOCIÉTÉ ÉVANGÉLIQUE.

TRANSLATED BY
DAVID DUNDAS SCOTT, Esq.,
AUTHOR OF THE "SUPPRESSION OF THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE."

WITH NOTES
FROM THE NETHERLANDS EDITION OF THE REV. J. J. LE ROY, OF THE
DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH.

VOL. I.

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"I call accessory, the state of things in this frail and fleeting life. I call principal, the spiritual government in which the providence of God shines forth with sovereign lustre."—Beza.

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ENGLISH TRANSLATOR'S

PREFACE.

THE work of which a new translation is now presented to British readers, is already so widely known and highly appreciated, that praise from me is altogether superfluous. An excellent estimate of it will be found in the preface to the Netherlands edition, to which this is indebted for many valuable Notes. I may advert, however, to some circumstances which make it desirable that M. Merle d'Aubigné's history should be still more extensively read amongst us, and to some of the objections, also, that have been brought against it.

We are manifestly deficient in good Church histories, and feel this the more, from the number and excellence of works of that nature, devoted mainly or exclusively to civil affairs. Various causes may be assigned for this defect, but there can be no valid reason for not endeavouring to supply it, by naturalising foreign if we cannot find native works of equal excellence. As protestants, we are not educated by a sacerdotal or monastic caste, ever seeking to enhance their pretensions to respect and authority by pointing to the marvellous and the magnificent in the past annals of what they call "the church;" and in our ordinary religious instructions, Scriptural history and doctrines naturally and properly occupy so large a space, that the records of times subsequent to the completion of the sacred canon, are apt to be undervalued and neglected.¹ Were authentic church history to occupy an equal space in protestant teaching with the legends of saints in the papal communion, doubtless that department of popular literature would not be so defective as it is.

A single glance at our previous resources shows how much reason we have to hail the work of M. Merle d'Aubigné. Fox, Fuller, Burnett and some others of our older church historians, are either quaint or prosaic, and are at the same time both bulky and incomplete. Others, also, who have written more lately, have confined themselves to particular parts only of the ground which they might have traversed, and have superadded the faults of partiality and partizanship. Mosheim and Milner stand pre-eminent in respect of the compass they embrace, and the spirit in which they have executed their task; but

¹ Modern church history is taught, it appears, in the public schools of Prussia, to all the youth of that country.

their volumes are not written in a popular style, and extend over too vast a period to admit of sufficient justice being done to all its parts. Not that either of those authors is superficial, for much solid learning and valuable criticism are to be found in both: but they necessarily partake of the nature of epitomes, and so far fall under lord Bacon's censure when he speaks of these as "the moths and corruptors of history." This has also contributed to make them unpopular, particularly to the present generation of readers, which, as I shall afterwards have to remark, considers minuteness of historical delineation as essential to interest, and all but essential to truth. Mere epitomes, such as we have in Bossuet's *Universal history*, or such as are so often to be found in the periodical literature of the day, may be animated and even captivating, but will always be found to owe these qualities more to the genius of the writer than to the events he introduces. Genius may place a few detached facts in bold relief, and throw a splendid colouring over them, but this is neither rightly to appreciate past events, nor to learn the proper lessons of history.

The very charms of our secular historians have done much to throw church history and historians into the shade. In childhood we are fascinated with the spirit-stirring annals of Greece and Rome, and as we advance in years, Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, &c. tend to confirm the illusion that while secular events form the staple of history, the memorials of that body to which all worldly things are subordinated in the Divine counsels, and which is destined to surpass all earthly empires in duration and glory, are merely adventitious and episodal.

Some of our histories of particular periods and churches, and many of our ecclesiastical biographies, are admirable of their kind. But, neither together nor separately, do they supply the place of more extensive works. No where do we find so long and important a period as the sixteenth century, treated with the fulness which it receives in the pages of this Genevan historian.

If any be prejudiced against this work because written by a foreigner, be it remembered that this very circumstance is attended with peculiar advantages. Residing at one time in Germany, at another in Belgium, settling finally at Geneva, and frequently visiting France, the author has had manifest facilities for collecting his materials, and by familiarity with some of the most important scenes of the Reformation, he has been enabled to describe these with much of the animation and graphic power of an eye-witness.

In the scenic effect of many of his descriptions, and the dramatic turn which his narrative derives from a frequent use of the present tense,¹ the author may offend the taste of many of his readers on this side of the Channel, and the same persons will probably complain that

¹ This I have ventured very often to alter in the translation.

his style is occasionally too elaborate and ambitious; nay, they may object to those picturesque descriptions, and that occasionally romantic colouring which with others possibly constitute one of the grand charms of his work. I do not wonder at this. The extreme simplicity of the style of Herodotus has had many readers to admire, and many authors to perpetuate it in Britain. It may even be objected by some, who think they cannot extend the authority of holy Scripture too far, that the history of the Church ought to be written with the same unadorned simplicity that distinguishes the pages of inspiration. Putting the Bible out of view, I confess that the author's other writings, and the familiarity he must have contracted with the simple chroniclers of the sixteenth century, might have led us to expect somewhat more of the soberness of the Genevan style, and of the uncloying simplicity of the elder annalists of France; qualities which would have secured him, likewise, from the sneer that his work is a romance rather than a history.

But many valid considerations may have induced him so far to modify the form in which his labours are presented to the public, as to suggest the idea, that while in substance they are from the hand of a master, imbued with the tastes as well as familiar with the solid learning of a former age, in point of style they have received the elaboration of some artist, who, from being chiefly conversant with the literature of the present day, has been able to adapt them to the taste of the living generation, particularly in France. If his history differ in point of style from his other productions; if it do not all possess the chasteness and simplicity which unquestionably mark a great part of it; may it not be that by an innocent modification of his style, he has sought to allure to the impartial study of one of the most important eras in the history of the Church, a multitude of readers who might otherwise have treated his labours with contempt? It was of infinite consequence that that host of prejudices, which has hitherto enveloped the ecclesiastical proceedings of the sixteenth century, and disfigured both the men and the measures of that period in the minds of the vast reading population, especially of France, should be removed; but in order to this being done effectually, the historian behoved to consult, and, in point of taste, to make what he himself might deem concessions to the likings and dislikings of the persons who needed to be disabused of their prejudices. This service the late Dr. M'Crie rendered to the cause of the Reformation in his native country, and in Italy and Spain; he was engaged in attempting the same task with regard to Geneva and France, when taken from his labours to his rest; the taste which he needed to consult, he did consult, seeking to gain the public ear by a rare combination of that simple vigour and purity which were then more popular than now with British readers; and he lived to see the men whose prin-

ciples and characters he sought to rescue from calumny and oblivion, occupy a new and honourable place in the judgments of all intelligent and candid men. But other qualities are now thought indispensable to the interest of history both in France and Britain. Our neighbours are accustomed to scenic representations from their infancy, and acquire an early relish for dramatic effect. This is not so with us, but a taste for the picturesque and romantic, and for having the scenes and events of history minutely delineated and brightly coloured prevails in both countries; and, accordingly, by some of those very peculiarities of style which have been blamed in the author's pages, there can be no doubt that he has obtained a reading from multitudes who would otherwise have slighted them. I do not see that this popularity has been improperly acquired, if the essential truth of history have been preserved, and it in no wise follows that that grand point has been sacrificed. The use of the present tense can mislead no one as to the time when the events related actually took place. There is such a thing, too, as the romance of real life, and this was pre-eminently the case in regard to many, both of the greater and lesser actors in the scenes of the Reformation. Many things, moreover, become picturesque, and to the taste of our age interesting, in the exact proportion that they are minutely and accurately described. Truth and fiction are not necessarily associated with certain peculiarities of manner and style. Defoe's fictions, though written with what seems the most artless simplicity, are not the less the pure creations of their author's fancy, and the truth of the history before us must be tested by the numerous references to authorities scattered throughout its pages, and by the author's faithfulness to those authorities, not by vague insinuations grounded on the mere peculiarities of his style.

In these views I am happy to find myself borne out by some very judicious remarks, occurring in a lately published criticism on the *Pictorial History of England*.¹ In alluding to that alteration in the public taste, mainly referable, the author thinks, to the almost omnipotent influence of Sir Walter Scott, and according to which historians who have written "with a total absence of every thing like historical colour and costume in their portraits," have become so far unpopular, he admits that "in as far as picturesque effect, and the minute particularities which give colour to history and fiction are concerned, there is of course no ground for quarrel with this progressive change in the public taste, in as much as it is an advance towards truth." His fears spring from a different source. He dreads, and with reason too, that the minute accuracy of historical painting demanded by the taste of the present day, may lead to those general characteristics which are common to men in all circumstances, being lost sight of in

¹ See *Edinburgh Review*, No. CL.

our attention to those that are distinctive. "Substantial reality," says he, "no longer suffices us, we must have outward verisimilitude also; and we become apt to mistake the show for the substance;" and thus "history may become rather a gallery of portraits than a series of examples."

These remarks, it must be confessed, go far to justify those who attribute to an express provision of divine wisdom the absence of every thing like the picturesque and romantic in the narratives of the four evangelists, even when, as relating our Lord's temptation in the wilderness, his preaching on the mount, his feeding the multitudes, &c., there seemed ample scope for introducing it; and they certainly suggest an important lesson to the readers of the work before us. It cannot be said that in endeavouring to meet in some measure the present taste for minute local colouring and so forth, the author has lost sight of "the substantial realities" of his subject, or of the great lessons and bright examples of the period which he reviews. The reader, however, may be tempted to do so. Fascinated by what is adventitious and peculiar to an age, the fashion of which has in so many respects past away, he may gratify his curiosity and his imagination while his heart and conscience remain untouched, and thus he may make what is true, and was designed to be instructive, as utterly worthless in point of moral results, as if it really were a mere romance.

Two objections yet remain to be noticed.

The reader needs to be on his guard against an impression which the perusal of the first volume of the original work is likely to create, and which the author seems either not to have observed, or at least does not directly seek to rectify, until he has occasion to speak of Luther's return from the Wartburg to Wittemberg in his third volume. The substitution of forms for life, of superstitious ceremonies for the worship of the true God in spirit and in truth, and of domination on the one hand, and abject servility on the other, for the feelings of Christian love and brotherhood, by all which popery stands out in such decided contrast with primitive Christianity, together with the cold and sceptical formality which marks, alas! many of the nominally protestant churches of our day, has led the author to speak too slightly, in the opinion of many excellent persons, of every thing like established ecclesiastical forms, constitution, and discipline. Indeed, one might suppose from some of his expressions, that he considered anything beyond a vague sympathy, loosely connecting persons of one faith and common feelings, as destructive of inward life and spirituality. But to those who give the whole work an attentive perusal, I am convinced it will appear that this in reality is as little the author's opinion as it is certainly far from being scripturally sound, or likely to promote vital godliness and true Christian liberty.

The last objection is that to which I advert in a note at page 69, and it applies to the loose and dangerous employment which some have thought to be occasionally made by the author, of language borrowed from the infidel philosophy of the last century. My criticism having been quoted in a short notice of this translation by the London Record of 2d December last, it thus fell under the eye of M. Merle d'Aubigné himself, and drew from him an explanation to a correspondent, which was subsequently inserted in the same paper, and which in fairness at once to the author and myself I think it right to introduce here. As the expressions which have sounded strangely in the ears of some Christian readers, nearly all owe their suspicious aspect to their being supposed to attribute too much to the unaided powers of man, and to favour the idea, so popular with a certain school of philosophers, that mankind are in a progressive state, irrespective altogether of the action of Christianity on their individual and collective characters, this more elaborate development of the author's views will be found to apply to nearly all of them. "The Record of December the 2d announces the translation of the first volume of my *History of the Reformation* by Mr. D. D. Scott, and cites a remark of the translator's. I do not think the words '*the human mind was growing OLDER,*' rightly interpret the French expression, '*L'esprit humain croissait.*' It appears to me that Mr. Scott has rather translated the words as if I had written *L'esprit humain vieillissait*, which is not the same thing. A youth of eighteen increases in years, but we cannot say that he grows old (*vieillesse*). From the ruins of ancient humanity God brought out a new one (*une nouvelle*)."

The English reader will at once perceive that M. M. d'A. fails to observe the wide difference between our use of the word *old*, and the French use of *vieux*—that to "increase in years," and "to grow older," in English mean precisely the same thing—and that had I translated *croissait* as if it had been *vieillissait*, and represented the human mind as growing *old* or *aged*, the point of my remark would have been entirely lost. What I objected to was the idea of the human mind *advancing* by virtue of its own energies; now old age implies, not *advance*, but *decline*.

In the following paragraph, however, the discussion ceases to be verbal, and brings fully out the view that has been objected to:

"It is youth which is referred to here rather than age. But as to the remark, I think Mr. Scott has not well understood that I distinguish between *affranchissement* and *reformation*. The work of enfranchisement was rather that of the fifteenth century; the revival of letters and the discovery of printing, and the magnetic compass, are its most marked features. The work of reformation is that of the sixteenth century. There Luther is the first and principal. The work of enfranchisement was negative; it concerned matters of which

the human mind is capable. The work of the Reformation was positive; it was to create, and this is what the Spirit of the Lord can alone do. Opposition to Rome often existed among the humanists and men of letters as well as among the Reformers. But the fifteenth century substituted nothing for Rome; the sixteenth century substituted the primitive Church of Jesus Christ. This was the work of the Lord. I have also remarked, that with infidelity invading the Church it was all over with her, if the Reformation had not come to restore faith to her. Mr. Scott then is, I think, mistaken in his remark, and it appears to me that his is also the opinion of the *Record*. The Spirit of God, at the time of the Reformation, accomplished the work of enfranchisement much better than the human mind would ever have been able to do. But to deny, in the face of history, that it was begun in the fifteenth century, is a thing impossible."

There can be no doubt that the discoveries made in the fifteenth century, as well as the revival of letters, powerfully promoted the Reformation and the subsequent enfranchisement of the human mind. But I apprehend that the state of Italy and Spain down to the present day, not to speak of Turkey and other Mahometan and idolatrous countries which have long had the benefit of printing, the magnet, &c., fully establishes the point that, even with all these aids and appliances, the human mind is positively incapable of reaching any condition to which the word enfranchisement, or deliverance from bondage, can be justly applied. Take from philosophy what she owes to the Gospel, and even France will be found to owe little, indeed, to the natural powers of the mind. Vibrating between political bondage and anarchy as a state, and with a population divided between the slaves of Roman superstition or of selfish passions, she may fancy herself enfranchised because she has printing presses, schools of science and art, and a public press, but the enormous sums she pays to support a numerous priesthood whose tenets are vitally inimical to freedom, show that even she has not yet reached what can well be called a state of *affranchisement*, and when she does, I doubt not she will owe it to the Gospel not to "matters of which the human mind is capable."

I am happy, however, to find that any remark of mine has brought out so full a statement of the Author's views; for incorrect though I still may deem them, his explanation will show at least, that in none of the expressions which have been objected to in his work, as implying dangerous concessions to the philosophical spirit that would exalt the inherent capabilities of the human mind, has he really lost sight of its utter inability to do, what God alone can do, *complete* its own enfranchisement. In point of fact, both before and after the fifteenth century, we find attempts made by the human mind, unaided by the faith of the Gospel, to throw off both ecclesiastical and civil bondage. These, however, have generally proceeded from the rude energies of

an uncultivated vulgar, not from men whose civilization had been promoted by such aids as the invention of printing and the revival of literature. The unsophisticated instincts of illiterate mobs have repeatedly produced a devoted and disinterested, though headlong and ill-directed revulsion against ecclesiastical and civil wrongs, whereas the literate and polite have generally preferred consulting their own ease to the risks attending a courageous opposition to established abuses, however clearly apprehended by them, in church or state. The brunt of the conflict has almost always been borne by the former, while the latter have meanly sheltered themselves by simulating conformity with rites which they despised, and acquiescing in a tyranny which they detested; and, instead of furnishing martyrs to the cause of religious and civil liberty, they have even passively promoted the persecution of those who were so. So much for what man is capable of doing in virtue of any "growth" of which the human mind is susceptible, or of any aids afforded by the discoveries and inventions of past times, irrespective of divine revelation and the grace of God.

Such are the censures and objections which this work, like every other of similar pretensions and notoriety, has called forth, in so far as they have reached me. Granting that these were more numerous and better founded than they are, the Author's "History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century" would still remain a magnificent monument to his piety, genius, and industry. May he long be preserved in health and strength for its progress and completion! The faithful in old times, as we learn from both Testaments, loved to review God's dealings with their fathers, and to retrace the great events that had marked the history of the Church. This was a divinely-commanded duty with which they rejoiced to comply. Far from isolating the generation to which they themselves might belong, or from forgetting the special responsibilities imposed by their relation to the past and future, they found powerful encouragements to duty in connecting themselves with both. The work before us has invested a peculiarly instructive portion of the past with a fresh interest in the minds of many. May it long both continue to do so and to stimulate them also to pray and labour that the rich inheritance of privileges secured to us by the instrumentality of the faithful who have gone before, may be transmitted, increased not diminished, confirmed not weakened, to those who are to follow!

D. D. S.

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PREFACE.

WHAT I propose to write is the history, not of a party, but of one of the greatest revolutions that have ever been accomplished among men—the history of a mighty impulse, communicated to the world three hundred years ago, yet every where to be seen in its effects at the present day. The history of the Reformation must not be confounded with that of Protestantism. In the former all betokens a new birth in human nature, a religious and social change proceeding from God; whereas we too often perceive in the latter, a notable falling away from first principles, the play of parties, the spirit of sect, and the marked influence of petty individualities. Protestants only can be interested in the history of Protestantism, while that of the Reformation addresses itself to every Christian, or rather to every man.

The historian has a wide field before him. He may exert his descriptive powers on those great events which change the whole aspect of a people, or of the world; or he may delineate that calm onward course in a nation, in the church, or in human nature, which ordinarily follows after some sweeping social change. Highly important as are both these departments of history, most interest seems attached to those epochs which, under the name of revolutions, are the harbingers of new eras, and impart a new life to a particular nation, or to society at large.

Such was the transformation which with very inadequate powers I essay to describe, hoping that the charms of the subject

may supply my insufficiency. The name revolution, which I give to it, has fallen into discredit with many in our days, who all but confound it with revolt. But this is a mistake, for a revolution is a change wrought in the things of the world—something new unfolded (*revolveo*) from the lap of humanity; and, indeed, previous to the last century, this word was taken oftener in a good than in a bad sense, and people then spoke of a happy—of a glorious revolution. As the Reformation involved the re-establishment of the primitive principles of Christianity, it implied the very opposite of a revolt. For all that was worth being revived, its movement was one of regeneration, while for all that ought ever to subsist, it was one of conservation. Both in establishing the grand principle of the equality of souls before God, and in subverting the usurpations of a priesthood which pretended to place itself between the Creator and his creature, Christianity and the Reformation assume it as a first principle of social order, that there is no power but of God, and proclaim to all men: ‘Love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king.’

The Reformation stands out in marked distinction from the revolutions of antiquity, as well as from most that the world has seen in modern times. In these, the changes that have been wrought are merely political, such as the consolidation, or the overthrow, of the dominion of one man or of many; whereas that which we have now to describe, sprang simply but powerfully from the love of truth, of holiness, and of everlasting life. It showed a forward movement in humanity; for when, ceasing to pursue material, temporal, and earthly interests, and aiming at something higher, man seeks for immaterial and imperishable blessings, then it is that he advances—that he is in progress. Now, the Reformation was one of the brightest days of this glorious march; it was an earnest that the new struggle now going forward, will end at last on the side of truth, in a triumph still purer, more spiritual, and more magnificent.

Christianity and the Reformation form the two most important revolutions on record. Unlike the various political movements mentioned in history, their past operation has affected not one people but many nations, and the sphere of their future influence must embrace the entire world.

Christianity and the Reformation are but one revolution, effected at different epochs, and in the midst of different circumstances. Unlike in their secondary features, in their primary and principal lines they are the same; the one is a repetition of the other: the one winds up the old world, the other opens out the new, and the middle ages lie between. The former is mother to the latter, and if, at some points, the daughter bears marks of inferiority, on the other hand she possesses characteristics peculiar to herself.

Promptitude in action forms one of these characteristics. When great revolutions have subverted a monarchy, and changed an entire political system, or when they have thrown the human mind into a new course of development, they have been slowly and gradually matured; the displaced power has yielded only after a long process of undermining, and after its main props have been seen, one after another, to disappear. This remark applies even to the introduction of Christianity. But the Reformation presents a different aspect at the first glance. The Church of Rome appears in all its vigour and all its glory, under Leo X.; a monk speaks and all that vigour and glory crumbles away throughout the half of Europe. Such a revolution reminds us of the words in which the Son of God speaks of his second coming: 'for as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.'

There is no explaining such a revolution to men who see in this great event, nothing more than a *reform*, and who would reduce it to a simple act of the judgment, consisting in the selec-

tion of some, and the rejection of other doctrines, and in such a combination of the latter as formed a new whole.

How could one people—still more, how could many nations so promptly accomplish so laborious a task? How should this exercise of the judgment have kindled that fire of enthusiasm which is necessary to all great, and especially to all sudden revolutions? But the Reformation, as its history will demonstrate, was a very different thing. It was a fresh outpouring of the very life that Christianity had brought into the world. It was the triumph of the greatest of doctrines; the doctrine that warms its followers with the purest and most powerful enthusiasm, the doctrine of faith, the doctrine of grace. Had the Reformation been what many Roman Catholics, and many Protestants, too, of our day imagine it to have been; had it been but the negative system of a negative reason, childishly rejecting what displeases it, and disowning the grand ideas and the great truths of universal Christianity; never would it have passed beyond the bounds of an academy, of a monastery, possibly of a cell. But with Protestantism as understood by most, it had no connection; and far from being a worn out and emaciated carcase, it went forth like a man full of force and fire.

If we would understand how this revolution was so sudden and so extensive, we must consider two things, looking to God for the one, and going to man for the other. The hand that gave the impulse was unseen and almighty; the change effected was a work of God: and to this conclusion every impartial and attentive observer, who penetrates beyond the surface of things, is necessarily led. But as God acts by second causes, the historian has a farther task to execute. Men were gradually and slowly prepared by many, often unforeseen, circumstances, for the great transformation of the sixteenth century, so that the human mind was so far ripe for emancipation at the moment when the hour of its deliverance struck.

The historian having to combine these two grand elements in the picture he exhibits, this has been attempted in the history that follows. While engaged in tracing out the secondary causes that concurred in producing the revolution we have to describe, we shall be easily understood; but many will understand us perhaps less easily, and will even be tempted to tax us with superstition, when we attribute the accomplishment of that work to God. And yet this is the idea we particularly cherish. The following history, as the motto which it bears under its title shows, assumes first of all, and in front of all, the plain but pregnant principle: **GOD IN HISTORY**. It is a principle, nevertheless, which is for the most part thrown aside, sometimes it is even contested; and we therefore think it fitting that we should present our views on the subject, and justify the plan we have adopted.

History can no longer in our days remain that dead letter of dry details which most historians have been hitherto content to record. People now comprehend that in history as well as in man, there are two elements—matter and mind. Unable to resign themselves to the task of producing a mere material narrative, no better than a barren chronicle, our great writers have sought for some principle of vitality wherewithal to infuse animation into the materials of past ages.

This principle some have borrowed from art; aiming at simplicity, truthfulness, and the picturesque in description; and endeavouring to enliven their narration by the spirit-stirring vivacity of the events themselves which they relate.

Others have gone to philosophy in quest of the spirit which was to impregnate their labours. These have interwoven their narratives of events with political and philosophical views, lessons and truths; and they have given animation to their recitals by the meaning they make them suggest, and the ideas they have contrived to attach to them.

Both methods are unquestionably good, and within certain limits, both may be employed. But there remains yet another source to which especially we ought to go in quest of the mind, the spirit, and the life of times gone by; and that source is religion. History must be vivified with its own proper life, and that life is God. God ought to be recognised—God ought to be proclaimed in history—and the history of the world ought to be held forth as comprising the annals of the Supreme Ruler's government.

On descending into the arena whither the narratives of our historians have called me, I have gazed on the strenuous exertions and violent conflicts of men and of nations; I have been stunned with the confused din of arms; but no where has my regard been directed to the majestic figure of the presiding judge.

And yet in all such movements among the nations, there is a living principle emanating from God. God moves on that vast theatre where the successive generations of mankind are, one after another, tossed to and fro in a course of never-ending agitation. No eye, it is true, beholds him there; but although the godless crowd pass before him, without caring whether he be there, seeing that he hides himself; souls that think more deeply, minds that long for the very principle of their existence, only seek him the more ardently, and never rest until prostrate at his feet. And magnificently is their search rewarded. From the elevation to which they must have ascended before they could meet God, far from beholding the confused chaos which presents itself to the ignorant crowd, the history of the world looks to them like a majestic temple, to the building up of which God applies his own invisible hand, and which rises to his glory from the rock of humanity.

Shall we refuse to behold God in those grand exhibitions, those great personages, those mighty nations which rise, and, so to speak, come forth from the dust of the earth and impart to human-

ity a new impulse, form, and destiny? Shall we not behold him in those heroes who spring from society at set times, and put forth a might and a strenuousness beyond the ordinary reach of human capacity, while men and nations unhesitatingly flock around them, as they would around some mysterious higher power. Who was it that launched into the field of time those huge flaming comets which appear but at distant intervals, and shed down on the superstitious crowd of mortals either abundance and joy, or plagues and terror? Who, if not God? Alexander sought his origin in the abodes of the Divinity. And even in the most irreligious age, there is no man, however great the glory he may have acquired, who does not find himself compelled to connect himself, in one way or another, with heaven.

And those revolutions which hurl into the dust royal races, and even whole nations; those immense remains that arrest the traveller on the sands of the desert, those majestic ruins on the field of humanity—proclaim they not with a sufficiently audible voice, *God in history*? As Gibbon sat where once had stood the Roman capitol, and contemplated its august fragments, he owned the intervention of a superior destiny. In vain did he turn away his regard from what he saw and felt to be there;—that shadow of a mysterious power re-appeared behind every ruin, until he conceived the idea of describing its influence in the history of the disorganisation, fall, and corruption of that Roman power which had enslaved the nations. Shall we not discover amid the ruins of the past the same Almighty hand which met the eye of that man of admirable genius, yet who never knelt to Jesus Christ, as he gazed on the rubbish left by the monuments of Romulus, the sculptured marbles of Marcus Aurelius, the busts of Cicero and Virgil, the statues of Cæsar and of Augustus, the trophies of Trajan and Pompey's horses, and shall we not acknowledge it to be the hand of our God?

How astonishing that this intervention of God in human

affairs should be regarded as a superstitious notion by men who have been brought up amid the grand ideas of Christianity, while the very pagans acknowledged it.

The name given to the Supreme Deity by Hellenic antiquity, proves that ancient Greece had received from primæval revelations, the great truth that there is a God to whom we ought to trace the history and the life of nations. Him the ancient Greeks called *Zeus*,¹ that is, he who gives life to all that lives, whether men or nations. At his altars we behold kings and tribes coming to bind themselves by oaths; we find Minos and other legislators pretending, that to mysterious revelations from him they were indebted for their laws; nay more, we perceive this great truth figured forth in one of the most beautiful myths of pagan antiquity. Mythology itself may teach a lesson to the sages of our day; and we may be allowed to mention it, as there possibly may be some whose prejudices render them more accessible to the instructions of paganism than to those of Christianity. Well then, this Zeus, this Supreme Deity, this eternal Spirit, this principle of life, we discover to be the father of Clio, the muse of history, and that her mother was Mnemosyne, or memory. Thus, if we are to believe antiquity, history has both an heavenly and an earthly nature; and is the daughter both of God and man. But alas! for the purblind wisdom of our self-conceited age; it is far from reaching the heights of that pagan wisdom. By depriving history of her divine father, men make her a bastard child, a saucy vagabond, wandering hither and thither without very well knowing whence she comes, or whither she is going.

Now, this divinity of the ancient pagans was but a pale reflection, a dim shadow of the Everlasting of days—of Jehovah. The true God worshipped by the Hebrews would have all nations

¹ From ζᾶν, *I live*.

convinced that he reigns continually on the earth; and in order to this, if I may venture the expression, he gives a body to this his reign in the midst of Israel. A visible theocracy behoved to exist on the earth at one time, in order that the invisible theocracy which governs the world at all times, might for ever fix itself in the apprehensions of men.

And how brightly does this great truth, God in history, shine forth in the Christian economy! What is Jesus Christ, if he be not God in history? It was the discovery of Jesus Christ that enabled the prince of modern historians, John Müller, to comprehend what history is. "The gospel," says he, "is the fulfilment of all hopes, the point of perfection in all philosophy, the explanation of all revolutions, the key that opens up all apparent contradictions in the physical and moral world; it is life and immortality. From the time of my knowing the Saviour all has been clear to my eyes; with him there is no difficulty I cannot solve."

Thus speaks that great historian, and, in fact, is not the manifestation of God in human nature the key-stone of the arch—the mysterious tie which binds together all earthly things, and connects them with heaven? In the history of the world there occurs a birth of God, and shall God be excluded from history? Jesus Christ is the true God in the history of mankind, and this is demonstrated by the very insignificance of his appearance. When man would raise upon earth something to shade him or to shelter him, see what preparations, what materials, scaffolding, and workmen,—what hewing, and digging, and heaps of rubbish. But God, when so it pleases him, can take the smallest grain of seed that a new-born babe could grasp in its tiny hand; he puts it into the bosom of the earth, and from this grain, which lies at first unnoticed, he produces that

¹ Letter to Charles Bonnet.

immense tree, beneath whose shade the families of mankind may find shelter. The doing of great things by imperceptibly small means—such is the rule with God.

This rule finds its most magnificent accomplishment in Jesus Christ. Look at that Christianity which has now possessed itself of the gates of the nations; which at this moment reigns, or rather soars, over all earth's tribes from east to west; which philosophy herself, with all her scepticism, admits to be the spiritual and social law of the universe—that Christianity which is the greatest of all things under heaven's vault, nay more, of all things throughout the vast immensity of creation—yet, what was its commencement? A babe born in the pettiest town of the most despised nation in the world; a babe whose mother had not even what the most indigent, what the most wretched woman in any of our cities enjoys, a room in which to bring forth; a babe born in a stable and laid in a manger. O God! thee do I there recognize—thee do I there adore.

The Reformation acknowledged this divine order of things, and felt that it was destined to accomplish it. The Reformers often spoke of the presence of God in history, and we find the idea once expressed by Luther in particular, in one of those homely and odd, and yet not quite vulgar figures, which he was fond of using, the better to make himself understood by the common people. "The world," said he one day, while conversing with his friends at table, "the world is a vast and magnificent game at cards, and among these you find emperors, kings, princes, and so forth. The pope had for several ages beat emperors, princes, and kings. They gave way and fell under him. Then came our Lord God, distributed the cards anew, took for himself the very smallest (Luther), and with that he beat the pope—the conqueror of the kings of the earth. . . . That was God's ace. 'He has cast down the mighty from

their seats,' says Mary, 'and has exalted the humble and the meek.'"¹

The epoch whose history I desire to retrace, is important in its bearing on the times in which we live. When oppressed by a consciousness of his weakness, man is generally led to seek help in the institutions by which he is surrounded, or in the bold inventions of his own imagination. We learn from the history of the Reformation that nothing new is made out of things that are old, and that if, according to our Saviour's saying, new vessels must be had for new wine, so must there be new wine for new vessels. It refers men to God as the universal agent in history; it points to that divine word which is ever old in respect of the eternity of the truths it contains, and ever new in the regenerating influence which it puts forth; that influence which purified society three centuries ago, which then restored faith in God to men's souls when enfeebled by superstition, and which is the fountain of salvation in all epochs of humanity.

It is strange to see many who are now tossed to and fro by a vague longing to find something fixed to believe in, addressing themselves to ancient Catholicism. This, indeed, in one sense, is a natural movement; for so little known is religion now-a-days, that no one dreams of finding it unless where advertised in large letters on some sign-post rendered respectable by its age. We say not that all Catholicism is incapable of bestowing on man the object that he longs for. We hold that Catholicism ought to be carefully distinguished from Popery. Popery, in our view, is an erroneous and destructive system, but we are far from confounding Catholicism with it. How many respectable men, how many true Christians has not the Catholic church contained? How vast have been the services rendered by Catholicism to the

¹ Table Talk, or Colloquia.

nations now existing, at their first formation, at a time when it was still strongly impregnated with the gospel, and when the popedom was as yet but hovering over it like an uncertain shadow! But such times have long since passed away. Efforts are made in our days to re-attach Catholicism to the popedom, and when the Catholic and Christian verities are put forward, it is almost for the sole purpose of making them a bait to allure men into the nets of the hierarchy; so that there is no hope on that side. Has the papacy renounced any one of its practices, of its doctrines, of its pretensions? Can a religion that was felt not to be endurable by other ages, fail to prove even less so now? What regeneration was ever found to emanate from Rome? Is it from the pontifical hierarchy, altogether replete with earthly passions, that there can come forth that spirit of faith, of charity, and of hope, which alone can save us? Can a worn-out system, which is everywhere struggling with death, and which subsists only by receiving help from extrinsic sources, impart to others the life it has not for itself, and animate Christian society with the celestial breath which itself requires.

That void in the heart and mind which begins to agitate many of our contemporaries, will send others perhaps to the new Protestantism which, in various places, has superseded the mighty doctrines of the times of the apostles and of the Reformers. In many of those reformed churches whose first fathers sealed with their blood the precise and living faith that animated them, a grievous vagueness of doctrine now predominates. Men remarkable for their intelligence, and who have a taste for all that this earth presents of the beautiful, in these churches find themselves hurried away into strange aberrations. The only standard of faith they would have, is a general credence in the divinity of the gospel. But what is this gospel? Here lies the essential question: yet here each holds his peace, or speaks after his own fashion. What boots it to know that there

is a vase placed by God among the nations for the cure of their maladies, if none care about its contents—if none endeavour to appropriate it to himself. Such a system cannot fill up the void that is now felt, and hence, at the very time that the faith of the apostles and the Reformers is everywhere displaying its active efficacy in converting the world, this vague system effects nothing, enlightens nothing, vivifies nothing.

But let us not despair. Does not Roman Catholicism confess the grand doctrines of Christianity, even that God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—the Creator, Saviour, and Sanctifier, who is the truth? And does not vague Protestantism hold in its hand the Book of life, which is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for instruction according to righteousness. And how many honest souls, noble in the eye of men, and lovely in the eye of God, are to be found among persons ranged under these two systems? Why not love them? Why not ardently desire their complete emancipation from human elements? Charity is vast in its scope; it stretches out its arms to the most remote opinions, that it may bring all to the feet of Jesus Christ.

We may even now observe symptoms of the approach of these two extreme opinions to Jesus Christ, as the centre of truth. Are there not some Roman Catholic churches where the reading of the bible is recommended and practised? and as for rationalistic Protestantism, what an advance has it not already made? It was no result of the Reformation, for the history of that great revolution will prove that it was an age remarkable for faith; but may we not hope that it is gradually approaching it? For such Protestantism shall not truth go forth from the word of God; and shall not that word at length exercise on it a transforming influence? Already religious feelings may often be perceived in it, insufficient no doubt of themselves, but indicating a movement towards sound doctrine, which encourages us to hope for definite results.

But the new Protestantism and the old Catholicism are alike of themselves out of the question, and out of the field. The men of our days must look to something else for saving power; something proceeding, not from man, but from God. "Give me," said Archimedes, "a point beyond the globe, and I will lift it from its poles." This point may be found in true Christianity, which takes off man's heart from the double pivot of selfishness and sensuality, and will one day displace the whole world from its evil course and make it revolve on a new axis of righteousness and of peace.

Every time religion has been in question, men's regards have been directed to three objects: God, man, and the priest; and, indeed, there can be but three religions in the world, according as the originating and governing power belongs to God, to man, or to the priest. I call that the religion of the priest, which has been contrived by the priest and for the priest, and which is governed by a sacerdotal caste. I call the religion of man those various systems and opinions which human reason invents for herself, and which, being created by man in his diseased state, are consequently destitute of all sanatory power. I call the religion of God the truth as it has come from God himself, and which for its object and issue, has God's glory and man's salvation.

Hierarchism or the priest's religion, Christianity or God's religion, Rationalism or man's religion; such are the three doctrinal systems that now divide Christendom. Now neither in hierarchism nor in rationalism, is there any salvation for man or for society. Christianity alone can give life to the world, and unhappily, of the three now prevailing systems, it is not the one that numbers most proselytes.

Still it has some. Christianity is now exerting its regenerating influence among many of the Catholics of Germany, and, no doubt, of other countries also. Its influence is purer and stronger still, in our opinion, among the Evangelical Christians of Swit-

zerland, France, Great Britain, the United States, &c. Thank God, the instances of regeneration, whether in individuals or communities, which the gospel produces, are now no longer such rarities as we must go to seek in ancient annals. We have had occasion to witness the commencement of a powerful revival of Christianity, amid struggles and trials, in one small republic, whose citizens lead a calm and happy life, embosomed amid the wonders that creation has thrown around them.¹ It is but the commencement, yet already from the plenitude of gospel blessings, that people is receiving grace to make a noble, a lofty, and a courageous profession of the great truths of God's religion; an extensive and substantial freedom; an enlightened and devoted government; a reciprocal affection in the magistrates for the people, and in the people for the magistrates, which is too seldom to be found elsewhere; a powerful impulse given to education and to general instruction, such as in that respect will make their territory a model country; a slow but sure improvement in morals; men of talent, all Christians, rivalling the first writers of our language. All this profusion, pouring itself forth between the gloomy Jura and the sublimities of the Alps, and along the magnificent borders of the lake of Geneva, ought to strike the tourist who has been attracted to the spot by the wondrous scenes presented by those mountains and those valleys, and ought to present to him one of the most eloquent pages that the providence of God has ever written in favour of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is the history of the Reformation in general, that I desire to write. I propose to follow its course among the different nations it visited, and to show that the same truths have always produced the same effects, without omitting to point out that diversity of aspect which naturally arose from the different characters of those nations. Notwithstanding, it is in Germany that we shall best recognise, and chiefly study the history of

¹ The canton of Vaud, in Switzerland.

the Reformation. We there find its primitive type; there, too, it presents its most extensively organised developments; and it is there, most of all, that it has the character of a revolution, not confined to such or such a people, but one in which the whole world has an interest. The Reformation in Germany presents the true and fundamental history of the Reformation in general; it is the main planet round which, like satellites drawn into its movement, all the rest more or less revolve. The Reformation in Switzerland ought, however, to be regarded, as in some respects an exception, whether because it took place contemporaneously with that in Germany, and independently of it, or because, particularly in its later period, it presented some of the grand features which we find in the German Reformation. Although family traditions of flight and shelter, and the thought of combats, and sufferings, and of exile, sustained in the cause of the Reformation in France, make the French reform a subject to me of peculiar attraction, I know not if we can place it quite in the same rank with the above.

I believe the Reformation to have been a work of God; one may see God there. Nevertheless, in tracing its history I hope to be impartial. Of the chief Roman Catholic actors in this grand drama, such as Leo X., Albert of Magdeburg, Charles V., and Doctor Eck, I think I have spoken more favourably than most other historians; while, on the other hand, I have not sought to conceal the faults and defects of the Reformers.

Ever since the winter of 1831-32, I have read public lectures on the age of the Reformation. I then published my opening address.¹ Those lectures served as a preparatory labour to the history which I now commit to the public.

It is a history drawn from sources with which I had become familiar during a long residence in Germany, in the Netherlands,

¹ See *Discours sur l'étude de l'histoire du Christianisme, et son utilité pour l'époque actuelle.* Paris, 1832, chez J. J. Risler.

and in Switzerland; and during a course of study devoted to documents in the original tongues, bearing on the religious history of Great Britain and some other countries. These sources of information will be referred to in the notes that accompany the work, so that any further notice of them here is unnecessary.

I could have wished to authenticate various parts of my work by numerous original notes, but was afraid that their number and frequent recurrence might interrupt the narrative, so as to prove irksome to the reader. I have confined myself therefore to certain passages which seemed suitable for the purpose of better initiating him in the history I relate.

M. M. Michelet and Mignet, men holding the first rank among the historians of our day, are now engaged in preparing works that bear upon the Reformation, and have already delivered some fragmentary discourses in the Faculty of Letters, and at a sitting of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences. The task taken in hand by these celebrated writers, little resembles mine, which is a mere plain history, not pretending to talent, art, or philosophy, but simply relating events as they happened, and pointing to the principles which gave them birth. Should M. M. Michelet and Mignet give the results of their labours to the public, we shall have works of a very different kind. Their future readers will not be the persons to peruse these pages, for, after being habituated by such writers to the charms of style, to freshness of illustration, or to that powerful organisation of history which so admirably brings out events before the reader's eyes, what would they find interesting in my unadorned narrative? I intend it for those only who love to contemplate past events as they happened, not through the magic glass of genius, which colours and magnifies, but sometimes, also, diminishes and alters them.¹

¹ Since the above was written, the *Memoirs of Luther* by M. Michelet have appeared.

Farther, it will be perceived that this history has been composed in a very different spirit. The views formed by M. M. Michelet and Mignet on the Reformation, widely differ from each other; and still wider is the difference betwixt theirs and mine. Going neither to the philosophy of the eighteenth century, nor to the romantic tendencies of the nineteenth for the conclusions I form, and the colours I employ, I write the history of the Reformation in the spirit of that event itself. The principles of my work, it is said, are not remarkable for modesty. It is their very nature to lord it over all others, and they imperturbably assert this supremacy. No sooner do they encounter other principles which would dispute their claim to empire, than they instantly offer battle. A principle cannot rest till vanquished; nor can it be otherwise, for to reign is its life, and when it ceases to reign, it dies. Hence, while I declare that I have neither the capacity nor the desire to rival the historians I have just mentioned, I make a reserve for the principles on which this history reposes, and unshrinkingly assert their superiority.

Down to this hour I am not aware that we possess, in French, any history of the memorable epoch with which I am about to be occupied; and when I began my work, there was nothing that led me to suppose that such a desideratum was about to be supplied. This circumstance alone might have led me to undertake it, and I here put it forward as my justification. This void still exists, and I pray that He from whom all good proceeds, may cause this feeble work not to remain fruitless, for some, at least, among those who shall read it.

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION

OF THE

SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BOOK FIRST.

STATE OF THE WORLD BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

THE enfeebled world was tottering on its foundations when Christianity appeared upon the scene. It found the then existing generation dissatisfied with national religions which had contented its sires, and struggling to disengage itself from forms which had become irksome to it. The gods of the various nations had become dumb on being carried off to Rome, losing their oracles where the tribes that had worshipped them lost their freedom. Set up, face to face, in the capitol, they there neutralized each other; their divinity vanished, leaving a huge void in the religion of the world.

For a time, indeed, a certain deism, without spirit and without life, floated on the surface of the gulph in which the vigorous superstitions of the ancients had disappeared. This, however, like all other negative creeds, could produce nothing firm and solid. Strict nationalities were falling into decay along with their gods; a general fusion was taking place among the nations; Europe, Asia, and Africa, were merged in one empire, and the human race was beginning to feel that it was one family throughout.

Then was the Word made flesh.

God appeared among men, and as a man, that he might save that which was lost. In Jesus of Nazareth dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Here we behold the greatest event in the annals of the world. Placed in the centre of time, it connects the ages that went before and prepared it, with those that came after and flowed from it, and thus gives continuity and unity to both.

From that time forth all the popular superstitions became inept and meaningless. What little of them survived the great shipwreck of scepticism, sank before the majestic sun of everlasting truth.

The Son of man lived thirty-three years on the earth, healing the sick, instructing sinners, not having where to lay his head; and amid this humiliation, giving tokens of a grandeur, a holiness, a might, a godlike nature, that the world had never known till then. He suffered, died, and rose again; he ascended into the heavens. His disciples, beginning at Jerusalem, traversed the empire and the world, everywhere announcing their Master as "the author of eternal salvation." From the midst of a people that rejected every other people, there went forth the mercy that addressed its invitations to all, and opened its arms to all. Multitudes of Asiatics, Greeks, and Romans, men who up to that time had blindly followed their priests to the feet of dumb idols, believed the word. "Like a glance of the sun," says Eusebius, "it enlightened the earth in a moment."¹ Life began to breathe over the vast field of death; a new people, a holy nation, began to form itself among men; and the astonished world beheld in the disciples of the Galilean, a pureness, a self-denial, a charity, a heroism, the very abstract notion of all which it had lost.

The new religion was distinguished mainly by two principles from all the human systems which it dissipated by its presence; and, of these, the one bore upon the ministers who conducted its worship, the other upon the doctrines it announced.

The ministers of paganism were all but the gods to whom those human religions were related. The priest led the people blindfold, at least until the eyes of the latter were opened to the light. The world groaned under the pressure of a vast and haughty hierarchy; but Jesus Christ cast down those living idols from their thrones; that proud hierarchy he destroyed;

¹ Οὕτως ἡλίαν βολή. (Hist. Eccl. ii. 3.)

he took from man what man had taken from God, and restored the soul to an immediate contact with the divine source of truth, by proclaiming himself sole Master and sole Mediator. "One is your master, even Christ," says he, "and all ye are brethren."¹

In point of doctrine, religions of human origin sent man to himself for salvation. The salvation offered by earthly religions, was itself earthly. They told man that heaven was to be given to him as wages; they even fixed the price, and such a price! The religion of God taught that salvation came from God; that it was a gift from heaven, flowing from the amnesty and free pardon of a sovereign: its language was, "God hath given to us eternal life."²

In these two points, no doubt, we cannot sum up the whole of Christianity, but they seem to be the two leading features of the subject, particularly when we have to do with history; and as it is impossible for us to follow out the opposition between truth and error into all its ramifications, we must select the most salient.

Such, then, were two of the constituent principles of the religion which began to take possession of the empire and the world. With these a man is within the true bounds of Christianity; beyond these Christianity vanishes. Its decline or increase depended on their being preserved or lost. Now, of these two principles, one should take the lead in the history of religion, and the other in its doctrines. Both reigned paramount at the commencement; we have to inquire how they came to be lost, and begin by tracing the destinies of the former.

The church, at its origin, was a people composed of brethren. All, as a body, were taught by God, and each was authorised to go and draw for himself from the divine source of light.³ The epistles which then decided important questions, did not bear the pompous name of a single man, as chief, but, as the holy scriptures inform us, ran simply thus: "The apostles, elders, and brethren, to the brethren."⁴

But even the writings of the apostles inform us that, from

¹ Matt. xxiii. 8. ² 1 John v. 11. ³ John vi. 45. ⁴ Acts xv. 23.

among these brethren, there should arise a power which would subvert this simple primitive order.¹

This power, so foreign to the church, let us now contemplate both in its first formation and in its subsequent developments.

Paul of Tarsus, one of the greatest apostles of the new religion, having come to Rome, then the capital of the empire and of the world, with the tidings of the salvation that proceeds from God, a church was formed at the side of the throne of the Cæsars. Founded by that apostle,² it was composed at first of some converted Jews, some Greeks, and some Roman citizens. For long it shone like a pure light placed on a hill: its faith was every where spoken of; but at length it deviated from its primitive condition. It was by small beginnings that both Romes went on to usurp the dominion of the world.

The first pastors, or bishops, of Rome, lost no time in devoting themselves to the conversion of the small towns and cities by which that metropolis was surrounded. The necessity felt by the bishops and pastors of the champaign country encircling Rome, of having recourse, in difficult conjunctures, to an intelligent adviser, and the gratitude they owed to the metropolitan church, led them to cultivate the strictest intimacy with it. The result was what has ever been found in like circumstances; that intimacy, so natural in itself, soon degenerated into dependence. The bishops of Rome arrogated as a right, the superiority spontaneously conceded to them by the neighbouring churches. The greater part of history is made up of such encroachments, as the resistance of the parties whose rights have been invaded, forms the other part; nor could the ecclesiastical power escape the intoxication which urges men, after being already raised above their brethren, to covet still farther elevation. In this respect it merely fell under the common rule of humanity.

¹ 2 Thess. ii.

² The author here chiefly refers, no doubt, to the more extended and complete establishment of the church at Rome. Otherwise we know that before Paul visited Rome in person, there were already many Christians to be found there; that these, as a body, composed the church to which the apostle had previously written the epistle, now forming part of the New Testament; and, also, that some of these brethren, on his reaching the neighbourhood of Rome at the close of his journey thither, went out to meet him, (Acts xxviii. 15.) Yet from what Luke farther tells us in the course of that chapter, as also from what Paul himself wrote from his prison (Phil. i. 12—14.) we may conclude that the church there was greatly augmented and fully established by his labours.—L. R.

Nevertheless, the supremacy of the Roman bishop was then confined to the inspection of churches lying within the territory subject to the civil jurisdiction of the prefect of Rome.¹ But a vaster destiny still was presented to the ambition of this imperial city's first pastor, by the rank which it then held in the world. The consideration enjoyed by the various bishops of Christendom, during the second century, was proportioned to the rank of the city in which they resided. Now Rome was the largest, the wealthiest, and the most powerful in the world. It was the seat of the empire, the mother of nations: "All earth's inhabitants," says Julian,² "belong to her;" and Claudian proclaims her "the fountain of laws."³

Since Rome was queen among the cities of the universe, its pastor seemed naturally enough entitled to rank as king among the bishops. Why should they not regard the nations as their children, and their own authority as the supreme law? It was easy for man's ambitious heart to adopt such reasoning, and such was the case with ambitious Rome.

Thus it was that pagan Rome, at her fall, handed over to a humble minister of the God of peace, while seated in the midst of her ruins, those haughty titles which her unconquerable sword had won for her from the nations of the earth.

Fascinated by the charm which Rome had for ages exerted over all the nations, the bishops of the various parts of the empire, followed in the wake of the Compagna of Rome, and helped on this work of usurpation. They strove to bestow on the bishop of Rome some part of the honour appertaining to the queen city. At first, indeed, no dependence was implied in the honour thus accorded. Affairs were transacted with the Roman pastor as between equals;⁴ but powers once usurped, swell in bulk like the avalanche. What at first were simple brotherly advices, in the mouth of the pontiff soon became binding commands. A first place among equals, was magnified by his eyes into a throne.

¹ *Suburbicaria loca*. See the sixth canon of the Council of Nice, which Rufinus, (*Hist. Eccles.* x. 6.) quotes thus: "Et ut apud Alexandriam et in urbe Roma, vetusta consuetudo servetur, ut vel ille Ægypti, vel hic suburbicariarum ecclesiarum sollicitudinem gerat, etc."

² Julian, *Or. i.* ³ Claud. in *paneg. stilic. lib. 3.* ⁴ Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 5. c. 24; Socrat. *Hist. Eccl.* c. 21; Cyprian, *ep.* 59, 72, 75.

This encroachment of the pastors of Rome, was favoured by the bishops of the West, what from jealousy of the bishops of the East, what from their preferring the supremacy of a Pope to the domination of a temporal government.

On the other hand, the theological parties that were then rending the East, sought, each for itself, to interest Rome on its side, and looked for the triumph of its principles in the countenance it might receive from the chief Church of the West.

The petitions and intercessions that came from that quarter Rome carefully registered, and looked on with a complacent smile, as these nations came and threw themselves into her arms. She neglected no opportunity of augmenting and extending her power, and to her eyes, and in her hands, commendations, flatteries, exaggerated compliments, requests for advice from other churches, all became titles and documentary proofs of her authority. Such is man when placed on a throne; incense intoxicates him and turns his head. What he has, seems to him but a motive for obtaining more.

Even so early as the third century, the doctrine of the church, and of the necessity for her having an external unity, had begun to gain ground, and contributed to favour the pretensions of Rome. The grand tie that bound together in one, the members of the primitive church, was that living faith of the heart, by which they all held of Christ, as their common Head. But various circumstances ere long concurred in originating and giving extension to the idea, that there was a necessity for external unity. Men accustomed to the obligations and political forms of an earthly country, transferred some of their views and habitudes into the spiritual and eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ. Powerless as persecution was to destroy, or even to unsettle, this new community, it gave to it a stronger consciousness of its own existence, and led it to form itself into a more compact corporation. The one universal truth received from the apostles, and preserved in the church, was opposed to error as it flowed from the schools of theosophy or from the sects. This was well, as long as the invisible and spiritual church was identified with the church visible and external. But a great divorce ere long began and led to a separation between forms and life. The outward show of an

uniform and external organization, gradually superseded that internal and spiritual unity which is the very essence of the religion of God. Men forsook the precious perfume of faith, and prostrated themselves before the empty vessel which had contained it. With the decay of faith as a cementing principle, some other was sought for, and the members of the church thus came to be bound together by means of bishops, archbishops, popes, mitres, ceremonies, and canons. The living church having gradually retired into the secluded sanctuary of some solitary souls, its place was taken by an external church which thereupon was declared to be of divine institution. Salvation no longer streaming from the now hidden Word, it was held to be transmitted through the medium of humanly invented forms, and that none should possess it, unless received through that conveyance. No man, it was said, can by his own faith attain to everlasting life. The Christ communicated the anointing of the Holy Ghost to the apostles, the apostles to the bishops, and the Holy Ghost dwells in that order alone! In primitive times, whoever had the Spirit of Jesus Christ, was a member of the church; but now an inversion of terms took place, and it was pretended that he alone who was a member of the church, received the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

Once that the error of there being a necessity for the existence of a visible church unity was established, another was seen to follow—that of there being a necessity for having an external representation of this unity. Although we no where find in the gospel, any traces of a pre-eminence in St. Peter above the other apostles; although the very idea of primacy is inconsistent with the brotherly bonds which united the disciples, and jars with the spirit of the gospel dispensation which, on the contrary, calls upon all the children of the Father to serve one another, owning but one Teacher and but one Chief; although Jesus had severely checked his disciples every time that ambitious notions of pre-eminence issued from their carnal hearts, a primacy was invented for St Peter, and made to rest on certain ill understood passages: and forthwith, that apostle and his pretended successor at Rome, were saluted as the visible representatives of the visible unity, and as the chiefs of the church.

The patriarchal constitution contributed also, to this exalta-

tion of the Roman papacy. So early as in the course of the three first centuries, metropolitan churches enjoyed particular consideration. The Council of Nice, in its sixth canon, marked out three cities whose churches, according to it, possessed an ancient authority over those of the surrounding provinces: these were Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch. Now, the political origin of this distinction betrays itself in the very name first given to the bishops of these cities; for they were called *Exarchs*,¹ as if political governors.² At a later period, they received the more church-like appellation of Patriarch. This title first occurs in the Council of Constantinople, which council created a new patriarchate, that of Constantinople itself—the new Rome, the second capital of the empire. With these three churches Rome then shared the patriarchal supremacy. But when the invasion by Mahomet caused the disappearance of the sees of Alexandria and Antioch, when the see of Constantinople lost its rank, and some time after even separated itself from the West, Rome was left alone, circumstances induced all to rally round its see, and from that time it remained without a rival.

New and more powerful accomplices than all the rest, came, moreover, to its assistance. These were found in the ignorance and superstition that now took possession of the church, and delivered her over to Rome with blindfolded eyes and shackled hands.

Meanwhile this bondage was not consummated without a struggle. Often did the churches raise their voices in behalf of their independence, and this courageous tone was chiefly to be heard in proconsular Africa,³ and in the East.⁴

¹ The title of *exarch* was given among the Greeks to the governors of an extensive territory, comprising various smaller provinces. The exarchs of Ravenna, who after the greater part of Italy had been overrun by the barbarians, governed a considerable part of that country in the name of the Greek emperors but with sovereign powers, are well known.—L. R.

² See the eighth and eighteenth canons of the Council of Chalcedon, ἡ ἐξαρχὸς τῆς διοικήσεως.

³ The part of Africa specially bearing that name (a name given afterwards to the whole continent), and lying chiefly under the dominion of Rome, which governed it by a proconsul, a man of consular dignity. To it belonged Carthage, whose bishop, Cyprian, opposed the ambition of the Roman bishop, Stephen, and strenuously asserted the equality of bishops; in like manner as the bishops of Asia Minor in the East scorned to acknowledge the lofty pretensions of the Roman bishop Victor, in the controversy respecting the time of keeping Easter.—L. R.

⁴ Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, says of Stephen, bishop of Rome: Magis

But Rome found new allies to assist her in stifling the cries of the churches. Princes whose thrones were often made to totter amid the storms of those times, offered her their aid, on condition of her lending them a helping hand in return. Making concessions of spiritual authority in exchange for a due amount of secular power, they allowed her to have a cheap bargain of men's souls in the hope of obtaining, through her assistance, cheap advantages over their enemies; and thus did the hierarchical power during its rise, and the imperial power during its decline, mutually lean on each other, and by this alliance hasten on their double destiny.

In this Rome could lose nothing. An edict of Theodosius II., and of Valentinian III., proclaimed the bishop of Rome "rector of the whole church."¹ A like law was passed by Justinian. These decrees by no means contained all that the popes pretended that they could see in them; but in times of such ignorance, they found little difficulty in securing that effect should be given to the interpretation most favourable to them; and as the domination of the emperors in Italy daily became more precarious, the bishops of Rome could take advantage of this, in order to reduce them to a state of dependence on that see.

But already had the true abettors of the papal power gone forth from the forests of the North. To the barbarians who had swept over Western Europe and established themselves in the countries that they had conquered, every thing in Christendom was new. They were ignorant of the spiritual nature of the Church; they longed for a certain outward apparatus in religion, and threw themselves prostrate before the high priest of Rome with a half savage, half pagan adoration. With them for his

ac magis ejus errorem denotabis qui hæreticorum causam contra Christianos et contra *Ecclesiam Dei* asserere conatur. . . qui unitatem et veritatem de divina lege venientem non tenens. . . Consuetudo sine veritate, vetustas erroris est (Epist. 74.) Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia says also in the second half of the third century: Eos autem qui Romæ sunt, non ea in omnibus observare quæ sunt ab origine tradita et frustra auctoritatem apostolorum prætere. . . Cæturum nos (the bishops of the churches of Asia, more ancient than those of Rome) veritate et consuetudinem jungimus, et consuetudini Romanorum, consuetudinem sed *veritatis* opponimus; ab initio hoc tenentes quod a Christo et ab apostolo traditum est (Cypr. Ep. 75.). These testimonies are very strong.

¹ Rector totius ecclesiæ.

partisans, he had the West at his feet. First, the Vandals; next, the Ostrogoths; at a somewhat later period, the Burgundians and the Alani; then, the Visigoths; and, finally, the Lombards and the Anglo-Saxons, came and bowed the knee to the sovereign pontiff. It is to the stout shoulders of the sons of the idolatrous North, that one of the pastors on the banks of the Tiber was indebted for being fully established on the loftiest throne of Christendom.

These things took place in the West about the commencement of the seventh century, precisely at the same epoch that beheld the power of Mahomet advancing in the East, fully prepared, likewise, to make the conquest of a large portion of the globe.

From that time forth the evil went on gathering force. In the eighth century bishops of Rome were to be seen with one hand repelling their lawful sovereigns, the Greek emperors, and endeavouring to chase them out of Italy, while with the other, they caressed the mayors of the palace¹ in France, and from that new power, then growing into importance in the West, strove to obtain some fragments of the empire. Thus did Rome establish her influence between the East which she repelled, and the West which she courted, so that her throne may be said to have been erected between two revolts. Nevertheless, it was

¹ The dignity of mayor of the palace under the kings of the first Frankish or Merovingian race, after Clovis, was very high. They who held it were the first officers of state, and a sort of viceroys, the government of a whole section of the kingdom being sometimes absolutely committed to them. Under weak and spiritless princes they contrived to engross all authority to themselves, and left the kings in whose name they governed, the mere shadow of power. The most famous of these mayors was Pepin of Herstal, who under that title absolutely governed France in the early part of the eighth century, and at his death bequeathed his power and dignity to his son, Charles Martel, who became celebrated chiefly for his military expeditions against the Saracens. These had made the conquest of Spain, and hoped to effect that of France, but Charles arrested them in their victorious career, and thus rescued France and all Europe. By this his fame and power, as well as those of his family, were extended and confirmed; and consequently his son, Pepin, who succeeded him as mayor of the palace, threw off the mask, and with the consent of Pope Zachary, dethroned Childeric, the last nominal king of the race of Clovis, confined him and his son in a monastery, and assumed the title of king, after being solemnly anointed such at Soissons by the renowned Boniface, bishop of Mentz, who first preached the gospel to the Germans. In this royal dignity Pepin was succeeded by his son, Charles, afterwards surnamed the Great, who subsequently conquered a great part of Germany, and was crowned emperor by Pope Leo III. Both Pepin and Charlemagne, in return, bestowed extensive power and temporal authority on the popes: the former gave them those territories in Italy, afterwards called the States of the Church, which last gift was by the latter confirmed and augmented.—L. R.

a throne not beyond the reach of jeopardy. Affrighted at the cry of the Arabs who, after overmastering Spain, boasted that they might soon reach Italy by the portals of the Pyrenees and the Alps, and proclaim the name of Mahomet on the seven hills; startled at the boldness of Aistolph who led on his Lombards with the fierceness of a lion,¹ and as he brandished his sword at the gates of the eternal city, threatened to cut the throats of all its Romans, Rome, tottering on the brink of destruction, cast her terrified eye around her and threw herself into the arms of the Franks. The usurper, Pepin, demanded from her a pretended sanction for his new royalty; this the popedom granted, and obtained from him, in return, a promise that he would openly avow himself defender of the "Republic of God." Pepin took from the Lombards what they had taken from the emperor, but instead of restoring it to that prince, he laid the keys of the cities he had conquered on the altar of St. Peter, swearing with uplifted hand, that not for the sake of man had he taken up arms, but that he might obtain from God the forgiveness of his offences, and do homage for his conquests to St. Peter. Thus did France establish the temporal authority of the popes.

Charlemagne now appears; he ascends St. Peter's church, the first time, devoutly kissing the steps; a second time he presents himself there as sovereign lord of all the nations included in the empire of the West, and of Rome itself. Thinking himself bound to bestow the title on the man who already had the power, Leo. III. on Christmas day A. D. 800, placed the crown of the Emperors on the head of the son of Pepin.² From that time the Pope appertained to the empire of the Franks, and his relations with the East were at an end. Detaching himself from a withered tree which was about to fall, he grafts himself into a vigorous crab; and among the Germanic races to whom he devotes himself, a futurity awaits him to which he never could have dared to pretend.

To his feeble successors, Charlemagne bequeathed the mere

¹ *Fremens ut leo. . . asserens omnes uno gladio jugulari, (Anastasius. Bibl. Vita, Pontif. p. 83.)*

² *Visum est et ipsi Apostolico Leoni. . . ut ipsum Carolum, imperatorem nominare debuisset, qui ipsam Romam tenebat ubi semper Cæsares sedere soliti erant et reliquas sedes. (Annalista Lambæianus, ad an. 801.)*

wreck of his power;¹ and, indeed, during the ninth century, civil authority became everywhere unhinged by disunion, a state of things which Rome saw to be favourable to her advancing power. When could the church better make herself independent of the state than during that period of decline, when the crown which had been worn by Charles, was seen scattered in fragments over the territories of his late empire?

Then it was that the false decretals of Isidore² appeared. In that collection of pretended decrees of the popes, the most ancient bishops, men who lived in the days of Tacitus and Quinctilian, were made to speak the barbarous language of the ninth century; the legal customs and constitutions of France were gravely attributed to Romans of the times of the emperors; the popes were made to quote the Bible in its translation into Latin by Jerome, who lived one, two, or three centuries after them; and Victor, bishop of Rome, A.D. 192, was represented as writing to Theophilus, who was bishop of Alexandria, A.D. 385. The knave who forged this collection endeavoured to prove that all bishops held their authority from the bishop of Rome, who held his immediately from Jesus Christ. Not only did he register all the successive conquests of the pontiffs, but, more than this, he traced these up to the most ancient times. Yet the popes were not ashamed to take advantage of this despicable trick, and even in 865, Nicolas I. drew from it arms for his attacks upon

¹ Charles the Great's successors in no wise shared in his intellectual greatness. His vast empire, extending over France and Germany, devolved on his death, to his son Louis the Pious, a prince of narrow and weak understanding, who experienced much vexation from his children, among whom during his own life he portioned out his territories, and to whom, after they had alternately dethroned and restored him, he left the whole. They fought against each other and ultimately possessed, one of them the German empire, the other the kingdom of France, so as to make two distinct sovereignties; both which through the weakness of succeeding princes, the one at an earlier, the other at a later date in the tenth century, passed from Charles the Great's successors into new dynasties.—L. R.

² These consist of a collection of briefs and decrees, as was pretended, of popes of primitive times, collected and published in the name of Isidore, bishop of Seville, an ecclesiastical chief of reputation and learning, who lived in the sixth century, and all drawn up in such terms as to establish the pretended supremacy of the popes. As early as in the eighth century, some of these briefs appeared, but in the ninth, the entire collection was published and received as genuine without contradiction, owing to the gross ignorance of those times. After doing much to enhance and support the pope's authority during the middle ages, yet on the return of more intelligence, even judicious Roman Catholics acknowledged them to be a forgery, from the evident impossibility of reconciling their style and tenor with the times to which they were ascribed.—L. R.

princes and bishops.¹ This bare-faced imposture was, in fact, the arsenal of Rome for ages.

Nevertheless, the vices and the crimes of the pontiffs could not fail to suspend for a time the effect of the decretals. The popedom indicated its accession to the table of kings, by shameless libations; it began to be intoxicated; its head grew dizzy in the midst of debauch. This was about the time when tradition informs us of a girl, called Joan, being placed on the papal throne; of her having sought refuge in Rome with her lover, and of her sex being betrayed by her being seized with the pains of child-birth in the midst of a procession. But why should we needlessly heap shame on the court of the Roman pontiffs? Abandoned women at that time bore sway in Rome. The very throne which affected to overtop the majesty of kings, grovelled in the mire of vice. Theodora and Marozia installed and dismissed at will the pretended masters of the church of Christ, and placed their lovers, their children, and grandchildren, on the throne of Peter. These scandals, which were too true, may possibly have given rise to the tradition of the popess Joan.²

Rome now became a vast theatre of disorders, and the possession of it was disputed by the most powerful families in Italy, in a series of struggles, in which the counts of Tuscany usually came off the victors. That family, in 1033, dared to place on the pontifical throne, under the name of Benedict IX., a boy of twelve years of age, who after being tutored in debauchery, con-

¹ See Ep. ad univ. Episc. Gall (Mansi XV.)

² Although the author seems to think the well known story of the *popess* Joan a mere fable, yet the famous Mosheim is inclined not to withhold credit altogether from the account given of her. After stating that between the popedom of Leo. IV. who died in 855, and that of Benedict III. a certain woman, it was said, who had for long kept her sex concealed, by dint of learning, talent, and dexterity, opened for herself a way to the papal seat; and being invested with the title and dignity of pope, ruled the Church for the space of two years, and is now known by the name of Pope Joan, he adds, that during the five following centuries, this was generally believed, that many writers have testified to its truth, that nobody before the Reformation considered the thing itself to be incredible, but that after that, in the seventeenth century, it became the subject of a thorny and learned controversy, in which sundry most learned persons, both Romanists and Anti-Romanists, whetted their wits and set their learning to work, to destroy the credibility of that part of history: still, some of the ablest and most learned writers have judged it most reasonable to hold a middle course, agreeing that many fabulous and imaginary circumstances have been added to the fact, among which we may perhaps reckon what M. Merle relates of her fleeing with her lover to Rome, and giving birth to a child in the midst of a solemn procession, yet denying that the fact itself is destitute of all foundation in truth. And among these last, Mosheim seems to rank himself—I. R.

tinued his horrible turpitudes as pope.¹ One party elected Sylvester III. in his stead, and with a conscience defiled with adulteries, and hands stained with the blood of his murdered victims,² Benedict sold the popedom to a Roman clergyman.³

The emperors of Germany were indignant at so many disorders, and extirpated them for a time by the sword. The imperial government, availing itself of its sovereign prerogative, raised the triple crown from the mire in which it lay, and saved the worthless popedom by giving it decent men for its chiefs. In 1046 three popes were dismissed from office by Henry III., who, with the ring of the Roman patricians on his finger, pointed out the bishop to whom were to be delivered the keys of St. Peter's confessional. Four popes followed, all four Germans, and all appointed by the emperor. Indeed, when the Roman pontiff happened to die, deputies from that Church appeared at the imperial court, just as did deputies from other dioceses, to ask for a new bishop. The emperor even looked on with joy as the popes reformed abuses, held councils, and appointed and dismissed prelates, in spite of the opposition of foreign monarchs: and by such pretensions the popedom failed not to enhance the authority of its sovereign lord, the emperor.

¹ Cujus quidem post adeptum sacerdotium, vita quam turpis, quam fœda, quam execranda exstiterit, horresco referre. (Desiderius, abbot of Cassino, afterwards Pope Victor III. *De Miraculis a S. Benedicto, &c.* lib. 3. init.)

² Theophylactus. . . cum post multa adulteria et homicida manibus suis perpetrata, &c. (Bonizo, bishop of Sutri, afterwards of Placenza, *Liber ad amicum.*)

³ The times referred to in this and the preceding paragraph, were certainly the darkest and most confused that the Church has ever known. The history of the Roman pontiffs that lived in this century is a history of so many monsters and not of men, and exhibits a horrible series of the most flagitious, tremendous and complicated crimes, as all writers, even those of the Roman communion, unanimously confess. In proof of this we may turn to Theodora and Marozia mentioned by the author, the former of whom lived in open lewdness with Pope John X., first archbishop of Ravenna, and afterwards advanced to the papacy, on her application the margrave of Tuscany, whose wealth gave him unbounded influence in Rome; while her daughter lived in the same way with Pope Sergius, and from this illicit connection there was born a son, who afterwards, through his mother's influence, attained the papal dignity under the name of John XI. Benedict IX. also here referred to by the author, was excessively dissolute, and was more than once deprived of the papal dignity, or sold it, after being replaced on the papal throne. All was confusion. With the elevation of Leo IX. to the popedom, order was somewhat re-established; yet he and some of his successors were almost entirely governed by the monk Hildebrand, who afterwards reigned as pope, under the name of Gregory VII., and raised the papal power to its highest pinnacle. (See Mosheim's account of these times.)

But this was playing a game which exposed him to great risks, it being evident that the forces which the popes thus bore down, might, by a sudden rebound, place the emperor himself in jeopardy. The full-grown reptile might turn its teeth against the very bosom that had cherished it, and this, in fact, was the result.

Here there commences a new epoch in the history of the popedom; springing from its humiliation, it soon trampled under foot the lords of the earth. That whatever raised it, raised the Church along with it, aggrandised religion, and secured to the spirit its conquest over the flesh, and to God his triumph over the world—such were its maxims, and in these ambition found its advantage and fanaticism its excuse.

The whole of this new tendency was personified in one man, and that man was Hildebrand. This extraordinary person, who has been by turns indiscreetly lauded and unjustly abused, was the very personification of the Roman pontificate, when in all its force and glory. He was one of those pattern apparitions in history, which, singly, comprise a whole new order of things, like those which in other spheres of action, are presented to us in Charlemagne, Luther, and Napoleon.

Leo IX. took up this monk, in passing, at Clugny, and brought him to Rome; and from that time Hildebrand became the soul of the popedom, until at last he seemed to be the popedom itself. He governed the Church in the name of several pontiffs before reigning himself under that of Gregory. This great genius was completely possessed with one grand idea. He wanted to found a visible theocracy, with the pope at its head, as vicar of Jesus Christ. His imagination was haunted, and his fervour stimulated by the recollection of the universal domination of ancient Rome; and he would fain have restored to the Rome of the popes, what had been lost by the Rome of the emperors. "That which Marius and Cæsar," said his flatterers, "could not effect with torrents of blood, you are effecting with a word."

The spirit that guided Gregory was not that of our Lord, for to that spirit of truthfulness, humbleness, and meekness he was a stranger. He scrupled not to sacrifice to his projects what he knew to be truth when he thought they required it, and this

he did, in particular, in the affair of Berenger.¹ Yet there can be no doubt that he was animated with a spirit far above that of the common herd of pontiffs, as well as by a profound conviction of the justice of his cause. Headstrong, ambitious, and unbending in his purposes, he was at the same time adroit and supple in the employment of means calculated to insure success. His first labours were devoted to the establishment of the Church's militia; for before he attacked the empire, it was necessary that he should be strong himself.

A council, accordingly, was held at Rome, which withdrew pastors from their families and devoted them wholly to the hierarchy. The law binding them to celibacy, was both projected and executed under popes who themselves were monks, and it changed the clergy into a sort of monkish order. Thus Gregory VII. claimed the same authority over all the bishops and priests of Christendom, that an abbot of Clugny maintained in the order over which he presided. Hildebrand's legates, comparing themselves with the proconsuls of ancient Rome, traversed the provinces for the purpose of separating pastors from their lawful spouses,—nay, the pope himself, where the case required it, would excite the populace against married ministers.²

But Gregory's grand object was the emancipation of Rome from the tutelage of the empire; a design so bold, that even he

¹ Berenger, canon and regent of the academy at Tours, afterwards archdeacon of Angers, is known in Church history by his more scriptural views on the doctrine of the Lord's supper, and his impugning of the doctrine of transubstantiation. Under the compulsion of his enemies he had the weakness, more than once, to recant his opinions, which recantation he latterly revoked. On being summoned to Rome by pope Gregory VII. the latter assisted him in drawing up a confession of faith, set forth in equivocal terms, with which that pope expressed himself satisfied:—and although, at the instigation of Berenger's enemies, he consented to a more precise confession being proposed to him at a new council, which confession Berenger accepted under the influence of fear, yet he did not evince the slightest disapprobation of Berenger's vacillation, when the latter, on returning home, again revoked that last confession, nor would he allow himself to be driven to farther persecution by that churchman's enemies. And hence it appears from the whole conduct of that pope in this matter, as well as from what he himself declared to Berenger on the subject, that he shared with him in the views he entertained on that head, although, from political motives, as pope, he dissembled them. (See Mosheim). —L. R.

² *Hi quocunque prodeunt, clamores insultantium, digitos ostendentium colaphos pulsantium, perferunt. Alii membris mutilati; alii per longos cruciatus superbe necati, &c.* (Martene and Durand, *Thesaurus nov. Anec.* I. 231.)

would never have dared to conceive it, had not the discords that disquieted the minority of Henry IV. and the revolt of the German princes from that young emperor, promised to facilitate its execution. The Pope ranked then as one of the magnates of the empire. Uniting his cause with that of the other great vassals, he drew to his side the aristocratical interest, and proceeded to prohibit all ecclesiastics from receiving the investiture of their benefices from the emperor, under pain of excommunication. Thus he tore asunder the ancient ties that had bound the churches and their pastors to the government of the prince; only, however, to attach them universally to the pontifical throne. He set himself with a strong hand to bind down priests, kings, and nations, and to make the pope universal monarch. Rome alone was to be the object, whether of fear or of hope, to every priest. Earth's kingdoms and principalities were to constitute its domain. All kings were to tremble with awe at the thunderbolts launched by the Jupiter of modern Rome. Woe be to him who should resist!—subjects loosed from their oaths of allegiance; a whole country smitten with interdict; places of worship closed; church-bells mute; the sacraments no longer administered; and the curse pronounced reaching to the very dead, to which the earth itself, at the command of a haughty pontiff, refused even the repose of the grave!

Subjected from the very earliest period, first to the Roman emperors, next to the French emperors, and, lastly, to the German emperors, the pope was now emancipated, and for the first time, came forward on an equality with those potentates, if not rather as their master. Yet even Gregory VII. was humbled in his turn; Rome was taken, and Hildebrand obliged to flee. He died at Salerno, uttering these words, "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore is it that I die in exile."¹ Who will venture to charge with hypocrisy words spoken on the verge of the tomb?

Gregory's successors, with all the eagerness of soldiers following up a victory, threw themselves as conquerors on the enslaved churches. Spain on her being snatched from Islamism, equally with Prussia on being delivered from idols, fell into the arms of

¹ *Dilexi justitiam et odivi iniquitatem, propterea morior in exilio.*

the crowned priest. The crusades which had gone forth at his call, every where extended and augmented his authority; the devout pilgrims who thought they saw saints and angels conducting their armed expeditions, and who, after meekly passing barefoot within the walls of Jerusalem, burnt the Jews in their synagogue and bedewed with the blood of several thousand Saracens the very ground where they had come in search of the sacred traces of the Prince of peace, these carried the pope's name with them into the East,—a name that had ceased to be known there ever since the supremacy of the Greeks had been abandoned for that of the Franks.

On the other hand, the power of the Church effected what the arms of the Roman republic and of the empire, had attempted in vain; the tribute which their forefathers had scorned to yield to the mightiest generals, the Germans now laid at the feet of a bishop. Their princes, indeed, imagined that on becoming emperors, what they received from the popes was a crown, but in reality it was a yoke of bondage, and the kingdoms of Christendom, already subject to Rome's spiritual authority, now became her tributaries and her bondsmen.

Thus did the Church undergo a total change. At its commencement it was a nation of brethren, and now an absolute monarchy was established in its very centre. Time was when all Christians were priests of the living God.¹ But a haughty head now towered above the surrounding pastors; a mysterious mouth uttered a language full of pride; an iron hand compelled all men, small and great, rich and poor, bond and free, to receive the mark of its power. The holy original equality of souls in the sight of God was lost. At the voice of one man Christendom was now divided into two unequal camps; here, an order of priests, having the effrontery to arrogate to themselves the title of Church, and pretending to be invested, in the Saviour's eyes, with mighty privileges; there, servile flocks, reduced to a state of blind and passive subjection, and a people gagged and manacled, delivered over to a supercilious caste. Every tribe, language, and nation of Christendom, submitted to the domination of this spiritual king, to whom power was given to overcome.

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 9.

II. But, collateral to the principle which ought to predominate in the history of Christianity, we find another which holds a like leading place in the sphere of doctrine. What was the grand idea of Christianity?—that of grace, of forgiveness, of remission, of the gift of eternal life. This assumed that man was in a state of alienation from God: and that he could not of himself return to communion with that infinitely holy Being. True it is, that the whole controversy between true and false doctrine, cannot be quite comprised in the question of salvation by faith, and salvation by works. Still, that question forms its main feature. Nay more; salvation regarded as coming from man, is the creative principle of all errors and of all abuses. By the extravagancies that arose from that fundamental error, the Reformation was first introduced, and it was consummated by the profession of the contrary principle. Hence this is a feature which ought to be fully brought out and made salient in an introduction to the history of the Reformation.

Salvation by grace, then, was the second characteristic, essentially distinguishing the religion of God from all human religions. What had become of it? Had the Church preserved this grand primordial idea as a precious deposit? Let us follow out its history.

The dwellers in Jerusalem, Asia, Greece, and Rome, in the age of the first emperors, heard these good tidings:—"By grace are ye saved, through faith; it is the gift of God."¹ And at this voice of peace, this gospel, this word of power, many guilty souls believed, were reconciled to him who is the fountain of peace, and numerous Christian churches were formed amid the degenerate children of this world.

But, ere long, a great misapprehension was entertained on the subject of saving faith. Faith, according to St Paul, is the means by which the whole being of the believer, his understanding, his heart, and his will, enter into possession of the salvation obtained by the incarnation and death of the Son of God. Jesus Christ is apprehended by faith, and forthwith he becomes all for man, and in man. He communicates a divine life to human nature, and man, thus renewed and disengaged from the power of selfishness and sin, has new affections and does new works. Faith, says theology, in order to express her meaning, is the

¹ Eph. ii.

subjective appropriation of the objective work of Christ. If faith be not the appropriation of salvation, it is nought; the whole Christian economy is deranged, the fountains of eternal life are sealed, Christianity is subverted from its foundation.

This was just what happened. This practical view of faith was gradually forgotten, and soon ceased to be more than what it still is to many—an act of the understanding, the mere submission of the mind to a superior authority.

From this primary error there necessarily flowed a second. On faith becoming thus despoiled of its practical character, it could no longer be said that it alone saves; as good works no longer followed it, they had to be made collateral with it, and thus the doctrine that man is justified by faith and works, entered into the Church. To that Christian unity which, under one principle, comprehends both faith and works, grace and law, doctrine and duty, there succeeded this sad duality, which makes of faith and morals two things wholly distinct; this lamentable error, which by separating what, in order to live, ought to be united, and by setting the soul on one side and the body on the other, causes death. The words of the apostle proclaim to all ages: “Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

Yet another error came and unsettled the doctrine of grace; this was Pelagianism. Pelagius alleged that human nature is not fallen, that there is no hereditary corruption, and that as man has received the power to do good, the only thing wanting is an exercise of this will.¹ If this good consisted in some external actions only, Pelagius is in the right. But if we look to the principles whence these external acts proceed, and to the whole course of a man's inward life, then do we everywhere find in man, selfishness, forgetfulness of God, impurity and impotence. It was this that Augustine urged home upon the conscience. He showed that before such or such an act could be approved, it was necessary, not only that it should appear good when viewed externally and by itself, but, above all, that the source from which it issued in the soul, should be holy. After being expelled from the Church by Augustine when directly brought forward,

¹ Velle et esse ad hominem referenda sunt, quia de arbitrii fonte descendunt. (Pelagius in August. de *Gratia Dei*. cœp. 4.)

the Pelagian doctrine ere long insinuated itself, indirectly, as semi-pelagianism, and under the guise of Augustinian formularies. In vain did that great doctor still continue his opposition; death removed him from the scene, and error spread throughout Christendom with astonishing rapidity. It passed from the East to the West, and the Church to this day is unsettled and weakened by it. The dangerousness of this system chiefly revealed itself in this, that making good to consist in something without, not in something within, it led people to magnify the importance of outward acts, legal observances, and penances; so that the more a man performed of these things, the holier he became; through such practices lay the way to heaven; and so infatuated did people at last become, as to fancy they could see persons who, in point of sanctity, even exceeded what was required of them.

Thus would the pride of man's heart refuse to give the glory to that God to whom all glory belongs; thus would it urge the plea of merit to obtain what God desired should be a gift; thus did it endeavour to find in itself that salvation which Christianity brought to man, fully perfected in heaven. It threw a veil over the saving truth of a salvation coming from God, and not from man; a salvation which God gives, but does not sell; and thenceforth, all other truths were thrown into the shade; the Church was overspread with gloom, and a dark and dreary night ensued, from which numerous errors were successively found to issue.

Let us first remark, that two grand classes of errors were here combined in one. Pelagianism at once corrupted sound doctrine and strengthened the hierarchy; with the same hand wherewith it depressed grace, it exalted the Church; for grace—it is God, and the Church—it is man.

No sooner was salvation taken out of the hand of God, than it fell into that of the priests. These usurped the place of the Lord, and souls panting for forgiveness, dared no longer look to heaven, but only to the Church, and above all, to the Church's pretended chief. Men's blinded minds beheld the high priest of Rome occupying the place of God;—hence all the grandeur, and all the authority of the popes; hence a train of unutterable abuses.

No doubt the doctrine of salvation by faith was not entirely

swept from the Church, for it is to be found in the most celebrated of the Fathers both immediately after Constantine, and during the middle ages. It was not that the doctrine was formally denied, and that popes and councils denounced it in bulls and decrees, but that it was conjoined with that which reduced it to a nullity. It continued to subsist in respect of many of the Church's doctors, as well as many humble and simple souls, but the multitude held something very different. Men had invented a complete system of pardon; to that ran the multitude, and preferred cleaving to that rather than to the grace of Jesus Christ. Let us now glance at some of the transitions in this sad metamorphosis.

In the days of Vespasian and his sons, he who had been the Galilean's closest friend, the son of Zebedee, spoke thus: "If we confess our sins to God, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

About a hundred and twenty years later, under Commodus and Septimius Severus, Tertullian, a famous pastor at Carthage, held a very different language on the subject of forgiveness: "We must change our dress and food," he says, "we must clothe ourselves in sackcloth and ashes; we must renounce what serves for the body's convenience or ornament; we must fall down before the priest, and beseech all our brethren to intercede for us.¹ Thus had man turned away from God and gone back upon himself.

Acts of penance, as a substitute for the salvation of God, were multiplied in the Church from the days of Tertullian down to the thirteenth century. Fasting, walking barefoot, giving up the use of linen, and so forth, were enjoined, or perhaps, leaving home and country for some distant land, or, harder still, leaving the world altogether to become a monk.

To all this there were added, in the eleventh century, voluntary flagellations, and these at a later period and in Italy, then violently agitated, became quite a frenzy. Nobles and serfs, old and young, even to children of five years, went in pairs, by hundreds, by thousands, and by tens of thousands, through the villages, towns, and cities, and with nothing but a napkin about

¹ Tertull. De penit.

their loins, made processions to the churches in the depth of winter. Each armed with a whip, they pitilessly flogged one another, so that the streets resounded with cries and groans that drew tears from the eyes of those who heard them.

Yet long before this evil had gone thus far, the oppression that men endured from the priests was such that they sighed for deliverance. The priests themselves perceived that if some remedy were not applied, their usurped power would escape from them. Accordingly, they invented that system of barter which has since become famous under the name of indulgences. It is under John, the fasting man, archbishop of Constantinople, that we perceive their first beginnings. "You cannot, O penitents," said the priests, "discharge the tasks that are imposed on you. Well then, we, God's priests and your pastors, will take this heavy load on our own shoulders. Who can fast better than we can? Who know better how to take to our knees, or who can more meritoriously recite the psalter?" But the labourer is worthy of his hire. "For a fast of seven weeks," said Regino, abbot of Prum, "a man must pay, if rich, tenpence; if of moderate fortune, fivepence; if poor, three halfpence; and so in proportion for other things."¹ There were not wanting bold remonstrances against this traffic, but they were made in vain.

The pope soon discovered what advantages he might derive from these indulgences. Amid his ever-increasing pecuniary exigencies, he saw that they supplied an easy method of filling his coffers under the show of voluntary contributions. But so precious a discovery behoved to be placed on a stable foundation, and accordingly to this task the leading men of Rome applied themselves. In the thirteenth century the irrefragable doctor, Alexander of Hales, invented a doctrine which was admirably fitted to secure this vast resource to the popedom, and which by a bull of Clement VII. was declared to be an article of faith. But even doctrines the most sacred were called in to the support of this Roman money-making. It was alleged that Jesus Christ did much more than was required for the reconciliation of man with God; that in order to that, a single drop of his blood was

¹ Libri duo de ecclesiasticis disciplinis.

sufficient; but that he had shed much more than that, in order that he might thereby institute a treasury for the Church's benefit, which not ever eternity itself should exhaust. This treasury had been farther augmented by the supererogatory merits of the saints, arising from good deeds performed over and above what was required of them. To the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth had been entrusted the custody and administration of this treasure, and he applies to every sinner for sins committed after baptism, those merits of Jesus Christ and his saints in the proportion, and according to the amount, that such sins render necessary. And who would dare to attack a custom having thus holy an origin?

From that time forth, we find this inconceivably revolting traffic increasing in extent and complexity. The tariff imposed say ten or twenty years of penance for such or such a sin; "but," cried the greedy priests, "it is not only for each kind of sin, but for each several act, that so many years must be imposed," so that a poor man found himself overwhelmed with an almost everlasting penance.

Yet what availed even this lengthened-out penance, since life itself was so short? When was a man to have done with it? Where find time for accomplishing it? You may lay upon him whole ages of severe practices, but lo! death comes and the man laughs at the task, for death relieves him in a moment. Happy death! This, however, was provided against. The philosophers of Alexandria had spoken of a cleansing fire in which men behoved to be purified; several ancient doctors had admitted the idea, and this dream of philosophy, Rome now declared to be a doctrine of the Church; and, in fine, the pope issued a bull in which purgatory was made part of his domains, and included in his jurisdiction. He decreed that man should there expiate what in this life could not be expiated, but that indulgences could deliver men's souls from this intermediate state in which their sins must otherwise detain them. This dogma Thomas Aquinas sets forth in his famous *Summa Theologica*. And now nothing was spared that was likely to fill men's minds with terror. Man naturally shrinks from the contemplation of an unknown futurity, and of those gloomy abodes which he sees beyond the grave. New means were employed to give intensity

to this dread; the torments inflicted by this purifying fire on those who were consigned to it, were pictured forth in the most dismal colours. Even at the present day in many Roman Catholic countries, pictures are to be seen set up in churches and at public crossings, and in these, poor souls are represented amid the glowing flames as calling out in their anguish for some relief. What man could grudge the redemption-money which, by passing into the treasury of Rome, was to rescue the soul from such sufferings?

A new method was next discovered for augmenting this traffic, by turning to profit, not only the sins of the living but those, also, of the dead. It was announced in the thirteenth century, that at the cost of certain sacrifices, the living might abridge or even terminate the pains which their ancestors and friends were enduring in purgatory. Forthwith the treasury of the priest was enriched with fresh offerings from the compassionate hearts of the faithful.

For the purpose of regulating this trade, the famous and scandalous indulgence-tariff was shortly afterwards contrived, probably by John XXII., and more than forty editions of it have since been published. The least delicate ears would be shocked were I to repeat all the horrors to be found in it. Incest, if not known, was to cost five pence, and, if known, six. So much is set down for murder, so much for child-murder, so much for adultery, for perjury, for theft aggravated by house-breaking, and so on. "O shame to Rome," exclaims Claud of Esperse, a Roman theologian; and we add, "O shame to humanity," for no reproach can be uttered against Rome which recoils not on man himself, and Rome is but human nature running wild in one of its mischievous propensities. This we say because it is true, and we say it, also, because we ought to be just.

Boniface VIII., of all the popes after Gregory VII. the most daring and the most ambitious, contrived even to outstrip his predecessors.

In the year 1300, he published a bull, announcing to the Church that every hundred years all who came to Rome should there obtain plenary indulgence. People flocked thither from Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, France, Spain, Germany, Hungary; in short, from all quarters. Old men of sixty and seventy

took the road, and in one month two hundred thousand pilgrims were counted at Rome. All these strangers brought rich offerings along with them, and the pope and his Romans beheld their coffers replenished.

In course of time, Roman cupidity fixed a jubilee for every fifty, more lately for every thirty-three, and at length, for every twenty-five years. Then, for the greater convenience of the purchasers, and the more gain to the merchants, both the jubilee and its indulgences were transferred from Rome to all the market-places of Europe. No man needed longer leave home in order to obtain its benefits; for what people formerly had to cross the Alps to obtain, could now be had by each at his own door.

The evil had reached its utmost height.

Then the Reformer arose.

We saw what became of the principle which ought to predominate in the history of Christianity; we now see what had become of that which ought to predominate in its doctrines: both principles were lost.

The institution of a caste which was to mediate between man and God, and the bargaining away for works, penances, and value in money, of the salvation given by God,—such is popery.

The opening up for all men by Jesus Christ, without any human mediator, without that power which calls itself the Church, a free access to the great gift of everlasting life, made by God to man,—such is Christianity, and the Reformation.

Popery is an immense barrier raised in the course of whole centuries of labour, between man and God. If a man would pass it, he must either pay or suffer. And even thus, he does not surmount it.

The Reformation is the power that overthrew this wall of separation, restored Christ to man, and thus made a smooth path for him, whereby to draw near to his Creator.

Popery interposes the Church between God and man.

Christianity and the Reformation bring God and man together, face to face.

Popery separates;—the Gospel unites them.

After thus tracing the history of the decline and fall of the two grand principles, by which we must ever distinguish the

religion of God from all the religions of men, let us see what were the results of this immense transformation.

But before proceeding, let us render some honour at least to this Church of the middle age, which succeeded that of the Apostles and the Fathers, and which preceded that of the Reformers. Fallen, and ever sinking into deeper and deeper bondage as she was, the Church was still the Church. This amounts to saying that she ever most powerfully befriended man. Bound as were her hands, they still could bless. Great servants of Jesus Christ shed for ages a benignant light around them; and in the lowliest convent, and the obscurest parish, poor monks and poor priests were to be found for the comforting of great sorrows. We must not confound the Catholic church with the popedom. The latter was the oppressor; the former the oppressed. The Reformation, in declaring war against the one, announced deliverance to the other. Nay, it must even be admitted that the popedom itself was at times, in the hand of God, who can bring good out of evil, a necessary counterpoise to the might and ambition of princes.

III. Let us now cast our eye over the state of Christendom.

Theology and religion were at this time two very distinct things. What was taught by doctors, and what was practised by priests, monks, and people, presented two very different spheres. Yet they exerted a reciprocal influence on each other, and the Reformation had to do with both. Let us briefly examine both, and first take a view of the school of theology.

Theology still lay under the influence of the middle age. That age had awoken, and given birth to some great doctors. But their learning was directed neither to the interpretation of the holy scriptures, nor to the examination of what had been done by the church. Exegesis and history, those two grand sources of theological science, remained dormant.

They were superseded by a new science, and this was dialectics. The art of reasoning became the productive mine of the new theology. The middle age had made the discovery of Aristotle, and the study of this ancient author was pursued either in old Latin translations, or in the Arabic versions. In this revival of his philosophy, Aristotle rose like a giant in the West, lording it over men's minds, one might almost say over

their consciences. His method of philosophising, strengthened the tendency towards dialectics which already marked that epoch; and, in fact, it was a method well adapted to subtle researches and minute distinctions. This dialectic subtlety which had taken possession of the western world, was farther promoted by the obscurity of the translations of this Greek philosopher. The Church at first took alarm and for some time tried to combat this new tendency, dreading that this reasoning humour might produce heresies. But dialectics gave token of possessing good qualities; monks employed them in attacking heretics, and thenceforward their triumph was secure.

The distinctive feature of this method, was the invention of a multitude of questions on all sorts of theological subjects, and then deciding them by what was called a *resolution*. These questions often turned on the most useless points; as, for example, when it was asked whether all the beasts were in Noah's ark, and if a dead man could say mass?¹ But it is unfair to judge the schoolmen by such instances; for we must often, on the other hand, admire the depth and large reach of their understandings.

Many of them drew a distinction between theological and philosophical verities, affirming that such or such a thing might be theologically true, but philosophically false; and in this manner would they reconcile unbelief with a cold dead adhesion to the forms of the church. But other doctors, with Thomas Aquinas at their head, maintained that the doctrines of revelation were by no means contradictory to enlightened reason, and that just as charity, in the Christian scheme, does not annihilate man's natural affections, but rectifies, sanctifies, ennobles, and controls them; so faith does not annihilate philosophy, but may safely employ it when sanctified and illuminated by her light.

The doctrine of the Trinity called the dialectics of these theologians into strenuous exercise; and what with their distinctions and arguments, we find them falling into opposite errors. Some distinguished between the three persons so as to make three Gods: this was the error of Roscelinus of Compiegne and his adherents; others confounded them in such a manner as to reduce them to a mere distinction of ideas, and such was the

¹ Hottinger, Hist. Ecclés. V.

error of Gilbert of Poitiers and his followers. Still, the orthodox doctrine found strenuous assertors in other doctors.

The dialectic subtlety of those times occupied itself no less with the doctrine of the divine will. How shall we make the will of God to accord with his omnipotence and his holiness? Here the schoolmen were beset with difficulties which they endeavoured to remove with the aid of logical distinctions. "No one can say that God wills what is evil," said Peter of Lombardy, "but no more can any man say that he does not will it."

The greater number of these theologians sought by their dialectic labour, to weaken the doctrine of predestination, which they found in the Church. To this end, Alexander of Hales made use of the following distinction of Aristotle, that every action supposes two agents, to wit, an acting cause, and a something which is acted on by that cause. That divine predestination, says he, exerts an agency in effecting man's salvation, there can be no doubt; but this must be accompanied with a *receptibility* for this grace in the soul of man. Without this latter agent, the former is of no avail; and predestination consists in this, that God, in virtue of his foreknowledge, recognising those in whom this latter agent will be found, has resolved to impart to them his grace.

As for man's primitive state, these theologians distinguished between natural gifts and gifts bestowed by grace. The former consisted in the purity of the human soul's original powers; the latter in those gifts of his grace which God bestows on that soul, to enable it to fulfil what is good. But here these doctors split anew; some alleging that man originally had natural gifts only, and by the use he made of these, must merit those bestowed by grace. Thomas Aquinas, however, who will generally be found on the side of sound doctrine, alleged that there had been from the beginning the closest blending between the gifts of grace and those of nature, since the first man had enjoyed a state of perfect moral health. The fall, said the former, who leant towards free will, deprived man of the gifts of grace, but did not entirely deprive him of the primitive powers of his nature, else all sanctification must have been impossible, had no moral power been any longer found in man; while the stricter theologians thought that the fall had not only taken away grace, but had also corrupted nature

All owned the work of reconciliation which Christ had accomplished by his sufferings and death. But one party maintained that redemption could not be wrought out but by virtue of the expiatory satisfaction of the death of Jesus Christ, while others sought to prove that God had to this price simply attached redemption and grace. Others still, and among these Abelard, made the saving effects of redemption to consist in its causing confidence and love towards God to spring up in the heart of man.

The dialectic subtlety of these theologians discovers itself to us afresh, in all its profusion, in the doctrine of sanctification or of grace. All, admitting the distinction of Aristotle, of which we have spoken, lay down the necessity for there being in man a matter disposed to the reception of grace: *materia disposita*. But this disposition Thomas Aquinas attributes to grace itself. Grace, say they, was the forming power for man before his fall, and now that there is something in him to destroy, it becomes reforming grace. Further, they distinguish between grace bestowed gratuitously, *gratia gratis data*, and grace that renders man well-pleasing, *gratia gratum faciens*, and many more.

The doctrine of penances and indulgences, which we have already discussed, came in as the crowning error of this system, and spoilt whatever it could possess that was good. Peter, the Lombard, was the first to distinguish three kinds of penance; that of the heart or compunction, that of the mouth or of confession, and that of works or outward satisfaction. It is true he distinguished between absolution in the sight of God, and absolution before the Church. He even went so far as to say that inward repentance sufficed for procuring the forgiveness of sin. But he contrived, on another side, to return to the Church's error. He admitted that for sins committed after baptism, a man must either suffer the fire of purgatory, or submit to ecclesiastical penance, excepting, however, cases of an inward repentance so perfect as to supersede all other inflictions. He then suggests certain questions which he finds it difficult to solve in spite of all his dialectics. Supposing two men, equal in regard to their spiritual condition, but the one poor and the other rich, should die at the same time, the one with no resource beyond the ordinary prayers of the Church, while for the other, on the

contrary, there might be many masses to be said, and many good acts to be done; what would be the result? Here the schoolman turns himself from one difficulty to another, and says in the end: They will have the same destiny, but not proceeding from the same causes. The rich will not be delivered more perfectly from purgatory, but his deliverance will be more promptly effected.

Such are a few samples of the theology that reigned in the schools at the era of the Reformation. Distinctions, ideas, sometimes just, still mere ideas. Christian doctrine had lost that celestial perfume, that power, that practical utility, which proceed from God, and which mark the times of the apostles. It was necessary that these should come down again from on high.

IV. Meanwhile the learning of the schools was pure if compared with the real state of the Church. The theology of the learned was in a flourishing state compared with the religion, the morals, and the education of the priests, the monks, and the people; so that if learning required renovation, still more did the Church require reform.

The people of Christendom, in which term we may comprise nearly the entire population, no longer looked to a living and holy God for the free gift of everlasting life; and, accordingly, to obtain this they had recourse to all the means that a superstitious, timid, and alarmed imagination could invent. Heaven became filled with saints and mediators whose office it was to solicit this favour, and earth was replenished with good deeds, sacrifices, religious practices and ceremonies, whose object it was to deserve it. The following is the picture given to us of this period by one who was for long a monk, and afterwards one of Luther's fellow-labourers, Myconius.

"Christ's sufferings and merits were either treated as a piece of idle history, or as no more to be believed than Homer's fables. The faith by which the sinner appropriates the Saviour's righteousness and the inheritance of eternal life, was out of the question; Christ was held forth as a stern Judge, ready to condemn all who did not apply to the intercession of the saints or to papal indulgences; and in our Lord's place there figured as intercessors, first, the Virgin Mary, resembling the Diana of

paganism, and, after her, the saints, the catalogue of whom the popes were constantly enlarging. These mediators gave the benefit of their prayers to such only as deserved well of the religious orders which they had founded; and in order to that, it was not what God commands in his word that was required to be done, but a multitude of deeds contrived by the monks and the priests, and which brought them in a deal of money. Such were the Ave-Marias, and the prayers of St Ursula and of St Bridget; chanting and shouting day and night; and frequenting particular spots to which pilgrimages were to be made, and which became as numerous as there were mountains, woods, and valleys. Now, all these devout doings might be redeemed with money; and, accordingly, the monasteries and the priests were continually receiving, not only money, but every thing that had a tangible value—fowls, geese, ducks, wax, straw, butter, and cheese. Then would the chanting resound, the bells would be set a-ringing, incense would perfume the sanctuary, sacrifices be offered, the kitchens be filled to overflowing, drinking-glasses would make a din, and the whole of this medley was wound up and retrieved by masses being said. Bishops no longer preached, but they consecrated priests, church-bells, monks, churches, chapels, images, books, and grave-yards, all which brought in large revenues. Bones, arms, and feet, were preserved in gold and silver boxes: they were presented to be kissed during mass, and this, too, was a source of large profit.

“All these people maintained that as the pope stood in the place of God,¹ he could not be deceived, and they would not suffer any contradiction.”²

In All-saints church at Wittenberg there were to be found a bit of Noah's ark, some soot that had come from the burning fiery furnace into which the three young men were cast, a bit of wood from the manger in which our Lord was laid, hairs from the beard of the great Christopher, and nineteen thousand other relics of more or less value. At Schaffhausen there was shown the breath of St Joseph as caught by Nicodemus in his glove. A seller of indulgences went about Wurtemberg retailing his wares, with his head set off with a large feather taken from one

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 4.

² Myconius, Hist. of the Reformation; and Seckendorf's Hist. of Lutheranism.

of the wings of the archangel Michael.¹ But it was not necessary that people should go far to procure these precious treasures. Dealers in relics traversed the country, hawking them through the rural districts as has been more recently done with the scriptures, so that the faithful were saved the expense and trouble of making long pilgrimages, by having them brought to their doors. They were exhibited with great pomp in the churches. These travelling dealers paid a certain sum to the proprietors of the relics, and allowed them a fixed per centage on the profits. . . . The kingdom of heaven had disappeared, and men had introduced a shameless market into the place it had occupied on the earth.

Religion, too, was now invaded by a spirit of profanity; and the Church's most sacred anniversaries, those seasons during which the faithful were specially called to the exercise of self-examination and love, were dishonoured by buffooneries and profanations altogether pagan. The Easter jokes held an eminent place in the acts of the Church. As the feast of our Lord's resurrection called for joy, there were studious attempts made to introduce into the sermons preached on that occasion whatever could make the people laugh. Such a preacher sung like a cuckoo, another hissed like a goose. One dragged to the altar a layman attired in a monk's frock; a second told the most indecent stories; a third related the tricks of the apostle St Peter; among others, how he had once in an alehouse cheated the landlord by not paying his reckoning.² The lower clergy took advantage of the occasion to turn their superiors into ridicule; the churches were converted into stages, and the priests into mountebanks.

If such was religion, what must morals have been?

No doubt this corruption was not universal, and candour requires that we should not forget this. The Reformation itself gushed forth in a copious stream of piety, righteousness, and energy. It sprang from the spontaneous action of the power of God, but how can we deny that he had deposited beforehand the germs of this new life in the bosom of the Church? Were any one, in our own days, to bring together all the immoralities, all

¹ Müller's *Reliquien*, vol. iii. p. 22.

² *Æcolam*. p. *De risu paschali*.

the abominations, in course of being committed in a single country, this mass of corruption would, no doubt, even now make us shudder. Nevertheless, moral evil had at that time a peculiar character, and pervaded society to an extent that has never been witnessed since. And, above all, did the abomination desolate the holy places, as it has not been again given to it to do since the days of the Reformation.

Life had declined along with faith. The news of the gift of eternal life, is the power of God for the regeneration of men. Take away the salvation bestowed by God, and you take away sanctification and good works. This was verified in what followed.

An ignorant populace was powerfully stimulated to evil by the doctrine and the sale of indulgences; for albeit it was true, that, according to the Church, indulgences could benefit such only as promised amendment and kept their word, what could be looked for from a doctrine purposely invented with an eye to the money which it was to produce? The indulgence-mongers were naturally tempted, the better to promote the sale of their wares, to represent the matter to the people in the manner best fitted to attract attention and seduce them to buy. The learned themselves did not very well comprehend this doctrine; and as for the multitude, all that they saw was that the indulgences permitted them to sin; while as for the venders, they were by no means urgent in dissipating an error so favourable to their trade.

How many disorders and crimes must have been committed in those dark ages, when impunity could be had for being paid for! What enormities might not be dreaded, when a small contribution for the building of a church was supposed to deliver men from the retributions of the world to come! What hope of any change for the better, when communication between God and man had ceased, and when man, alienated from God, who is spirit and life, moved only amid a routine of petty ceremonies and stupid practices, in an atmosphere of death.

The priests were the first to fall under this corrupting influence. In their eagerness to elevate themselves, they had only sunk the lower. They had wished to deprive God of a ray of his glory which they wanted to transfer to their own breast, but their attempt had been vain, for they only concealed there a leaven of corruption, stolen from the power of evil. The annals

of those times teem with scandals. In many places, people liked to see priests living in concubinage with one woman, as married women were the more secure from their¹ seductions. What humbling scenes did a pastor's house then present! From the tithes and alms he received, the wretched man supported the mother and the children she had given him.² His conscience was troubled; he blushed before the people, at the sight of his own servants, and in the presence of God. The mother, fearing that at the priest's death she might fall into penury, provided against this beforehand: she stole in his house. Her honour was gone. Her children became an ever-living testimony against her. Objects of general contempt, they threw themselves into brawls and debaucheries. Such was the house of a priest. These frightful scenes furnished instructive lessons by which the people knew how to profit.³

The rural districts became the theatres of many excesses. The very abodes of the clergy were often the haunts of the dissolute. Cornelius Adrian at Bruges,⁴ and the abbot Trinkler at Cappel,⁵ imitated Eastern manners, and had their harems. Priests companied with depraved persons, frequented alehouses, and crowned their orgies with brawls and blasphemy.⁶

The council of Schaffhausen prohibited them from dancing in public except at marriage feasts, and from carrying two kinds of arms; it ordained, also, that all who should be found in houses of ill fame, should be stript of their clerical robes.⁷ In the archbishopric of Maintz, they leapt over the walls under night, and disturbed the neighbourhood with the noise they made while committing all sorts of disorders in the inns and alehouses, breaking the very doors and locks.⁸ In some parts, the priest paid the bishop a tax for the woman he lived with, and for each child she bore him. A German bishop, happening one day to be present at a great festival, stated publicly, that in a single year, eleven thousand priests had presented themselves to him for that purpose. We have this on the authority of Erasmus.⁹

¹ Nicol. De Clemangis, de presulibus simoniaciis.

² The words of Seb. Stor, pastor at Lichstall in 1524. ³ Füsslin Beyträge, II. 224.

⁴ Meteren. Ned. Hist. VIII.

⁵ Hott. His: Ecc. IX., 305.

⁶ Mandement of 3d March, 1517, of Hugo, bishop of Constance.

⁷ Müller's Reliquien, III., 251. ⁸ Steubing, Gesch. der Nass. Oran-Lande.

⁹ Uno anno ad se delata undecim millia sacerdotum palam concubin-
riorum. (Erasmi Opp. tom. IX. p. 401.)

This depravity of manners by no means diminished on ascending the scale of the hierarchy. Church dignitaries preferred the din of camps to the chants of the altars, and one of a bishop's chief qualifications was to know how, lance in hand, to enforce obedience from all around him. Baudouin, archbishop of Treves, maintained an unceasing warfare with his neighbours and vassals; he razed their castles to the ground, built forts, and thought only of increasing his territory. A certain bishop of Eichstadt, when administering justice, wore a shirt of mail under his coat and held a huge sword in his hand. He used to say that provided they attacked him in fair fight, he defied any five Bavarians.¹ Hostilities between bishops and their episcopal cities prevailed every where; the burgesses calling for liberty, and the bishops being resolved to have nothing short of absolute obedience. When the latter had the best of the struggle, they punished revolt by immolating many a victim to their revenge; but the flame of insurrection shot forth at the very moment when it was thought to have been completely put down.

And what was the spectacle which the pontifical throne presented in the times immediately preceding the reformation? Rome, we must say, saw not often so much shamelessness.

Roderick Borgia, after having lived five years with a Roman lady, continued the same illegitimate commerce with the daughter of that lady, Rosa Vanozza, by whom he had five children. He was residing at Rome as cardinal and archbishop; cohabiting with Vanozza and with other women too; and withal attending the churches and hospitals, when by the death of Innocent VIII. the pontifical see became vacant. This he contrived to obtain for himself, by purchasing each cardinal at a certain price. On that occasion, four mules, each laden with money, made a public entrance into the palace of the wealthiest of them all, cardinal Sforza. Borgia became pope under the name of Alexander VI. and was overjoyed at thus reaching what he considered the summit of earthly felicity.

The very day of his coronation, he made his son, Cæsar, a youth of ferocious and dissolute habits, archbishop of Valentia, and bishop of Pampeluna. He next celebrated, in the Vati-

¹ Schmidt, *Gesch. der Deutschen*

can, the nuptials of his daughter, Lucretia, with festivities in which his mistress, Julia Bella, took part, and which were enlivened with indecent plays and songs. "All the ecclesiastics," says an historian,¹ "had mistresses, and all the monasteries and convents of the capital were houses of bad fame." Cæsar Borgia espoused the part of the Guelphs; and when with their assistance, he had annihilated the Gibelines, he turned round on the Guelphs themselves, and overwhelmed them in turn. He wished, however, to have the whole of the spoils, thus acquired, at his entire disposal. In the year 1497, Alexander gave his eldest son the duchy of Benevento. The duke disappeared. A dealer in wood on the banks of the Tiber, George Schiavoni, had seen a corpse thrown into the river during the night, but said nothing about it: it was a thing of ordinary occurrence. The duke's body was recovered. His brother Cæsar had perpetrated this murder.² But it was not enough; he had a brother-in-law who gave him umbrage; and him Cæsar one day caused to be stabbed on the very staircase of the pontifical palace. He was carried bleeding into his apartments. His wife and sister unremittingly attended him, and even with their own hands prepared his food, dreading his being poisoned by Cæsar. Alexander stationed guards at his gate, but Cæsar laughed at these precautions, and as the pope was on his way to see his son-in-law: "what was not done at dinner, will be done at supper," said Cæsar to him. One day, in fact, he succeeded in reaching the chamber of the convalescent, thrust out his wife and sister, called in his executioner, Michilotto, the only man he treated with any confidence, and caused his brother-in-law to be throttled to death before his eyes.³ Alexander had a favourite, Peroto, his father's regard for whom gave offence to the young duke. He attacked him; Peroto threw his arms round the pope, under whose mantle he had sought protection, but Cæsar struck his victim, so that the blood sprang from the wound on the pontiff's face.⁴ "The pope," says the contemporary witness

¹ Infessura.

² Amazzo i fratello ducha di Gandia e lo fa butar nel Tevere. (M. S. C. of Capello, ambassador at Rome in 1500, extracted by Ranke.)

³ Intrò in camera . . . fe ussir la moglie e sorella . . . estrangolo duto zovene. (Ibid.)

⁴ Adeo il sangue li salto in la faza del papa. (Ibid.)

of these scenes, "loves his son, the duke, and stands in great dread of him." Cæsar was the handsomest and strongest man of his age. At a bull-fight he could easily make six wild bulls fall under the blows he struck. Not a morning passed at Rome but some one was found assassinated during the night, and poison consumed those whom the dagger failed to reach. People durst hardly move or breathe in Rome, each trembling lest his turn should be next. Cæsar Borgia was the very hero of crime. The spot on earth's surface where iniquity went to such a height, was no other than the throne of the pontiffs; and no wonder, for when man once gives himself up to the powers of evil, the more he affects to rise in the sight of God, the deeper does he plunge himself in the gulph of hell. It is impossible to describe the immoral festivities with which the pope, his son Cæsar, and his daughter Lucretia, indulged themselves; and no one can contemplate them but with horror. The very groves of antiquity perhaps never saw the like. Historians have accused Alexander and Lucretia of incest, but proof of this charge seems wanting. The pope's death was extraordinary. He had ordered poison to be prepared in a box of sweetmeats for one of the cardinals who was to have had it served to him at the close of a sumptuous supper, but this intended victim had gained over the steward, and the drugged comfits were placed before Alexander himself, who ate of them and died.¹ "The whole city ran together, and gloated with delight on this dead viper."²

Such was the man who filled the papal see at the commencement of the century in which the Reformation burst forth.

Thus had the clergy lowered both the reputation of religion and their own; and thus might a powerful voice well exclaim, "The ecclesiastical state is opposed to God and his glory. This the people well know, and it is too well proved by so many songs, proverbs, and sneers, at the expense of the priests, now passing current among the common people, as well as by the caricatures of monks and priests to be seen on all the walls, and even on playing cards; not a man but feels disgust when he sees or hears a clergyman approaching." These are Luther's words.³

¹ E messe la scutola venenata avante il papa. (Sanuto.)

² Gordon, Tomasi Infessura, Guicciardini, &c.

³ Da man an alle Wände, auf allerley Zeddel, zuletzt auch auf den Kartenspielen, Pfaffen und Münche malete. (L. Epp. ii. 674.)

The evil spread throughout all ranks: an erroneous specific had been sent abroad among men; corruption of morals answered to the corruption of doctrine; a mystery of iniquity weighed heavily on the enslaved Church of Jesus Christ.

Yet another consequence necessarily flowed from the neglect into which the fundamental doctrine of the gospel had fallen. Men's minds grew dark as their hearts became depraved. When the priests reserved to themselves the distribution of a salvation which belonged to none but God, they seemed by that alone to have acquired a sufficient title to popular respect. What need had they to study sacred literature? Their business now was, not to explain the Scriptures but to grant diplomas of indulgence, and for this, the painful acquisition of much learning was altogether unnecessary.

In the country parts, says Wimpfeling, preachers were chosen from among wretched creatures, originally brought up as beggars, and who had been cooks, musicians, gamekeepers, stable boys, and even worse.¹

Nay, the very higher clergy were often sunk in grievous ignorance. A bishop of Dunfield congratulated himself on his never having learned Greek or Hebrew; and the monks pretended that these two languages, but especially Greek, were the source of all heresies. "The New Testament," said one of them, "is a book full of snakes and thorns. Greek," he goes on to say, "is a new language, of late invention, and of which a man needs be well on his guard. As for Hebrew, my dear brethren, it is certain that all who learn it become Jews." We have this on the authority of Heresbach, the friend of Erasmus and a respectable writer. Thomas Linacer, though a learned and celebrated clergyman, never had read the New Testament. At the close of his life (in 1524) he made a copy be brought to him, but immediately tossed it from him with an oath, because on opening it, his eye had fallen on these words: "But I say unto you, Swear not at all." Now he happened to be a great swearer. "Either," says he, "this is not the gospel, or we are not Christians."² The very theological faculty at Paris was not then afraid to say before the parliament, "It is all over with religion if leave be given to study Greek and Hebrew."

¹ *Apologia pro Rep. Christi.*

² *Müller's Relig.* vol. iii. p. 253.

Whatever accomplishments might here and there be found among the clergy, proficiency in sacred literature was not one of them. The Ciceronians, as the admirers of Cicero were called in Italy, affected to sneer at the Bible on account of its style; and men who held themselves out as priests of the church of Jesus Christ, translated the writings of holy men, inspired by the Spirit of God, into the style of Virgil and Horace, in order that they might not offend the ears of good society. For example, cardinal Bembo for *Holy Ghost* writes *breath of the celestial Zephyr*; for *to remit sins, to bend the manes and the sovereign gods*, and instead of *Christ, Son of God, Minerva come forth from the forehead of Jupiter*. Finding that respectable scholar, Sadolet, engaged in translating the epistle to the Romans: "leave off such childish work," said he to him, "such fooleries are unbecoming a man of sense."¹

Such were some of the consequences of the system under which Christendom lay oppressed. The picture which they present, no doubt, makes the corruption of the Church and the necessity for a reformation evident, being the conclusion which we intended in sketching it. The vital doctrines of Christianity had entirely disappeared, and with them had departed that life and that light which are the very essence of the religion of God. The Church, as a body, had lost its vital energy, and there it lay, all but lifeless, extended over that part of the globe which had been occupied by the Roman empire.

Who could be expected to restore its lost animation? Where was there to be found a remedy for such an accumulation of evils?

V. A reform in the Church had now been the universal cry for ages, and all the powers of humanity had set themselves to make the attempt. But it was what God alone could accomplish. He began, accordingly, by humbling all the powers of men, in order that there might be full proof of their incapacity. He beheld them, one after another, dashing themselves to pieces at the foot of the colossus which they were endeavouring to destroy.

The princes of this world were the first who began the struggle with Rome. All the might of the Hohenstaufen family,²

¹ Felleri, Mon. ined., p. 400.

² The German emperors of the house of Hohenstaufen in Swabia. To wit, the emperors of Charlemagne's family who reigned during the ninth century, were succeeded, first, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, by emperors of the dual houses of Saxony and Franconia alternatively, and thereafter, in the twelfth century, by those here referred to, of the house of Swabia, and tracing their

heroes with the crown of the empire encircling their brows, seemed pledged to humble and reform Rome, and to rescue the nations, and Germany in particular, from her tyranny. But the petty castle of Canusium discovers to us of what small avail was the power of the empire, when matched with the Church's usurping chief. We there see that redoubtable prince, the emperor Henry IV., after a long and useless struggle with Rome, reduced to spend three whole days and nights in the ditches of that insignificant Italian fortress, exposed to the winter's piercing cold, despoiled of his imperial robes, without shoes, with no better covering than some woollens, imploring with cries interrupted with sobs, the compassion of Hildebrand, before whom he throws himself on his knees, and who deigns at length, after three lamentable nights had past, to allow himself so far to be wrought upon as to grant forgiveness to the suppliant.² Of so small account was the might of the great ones of the earth, of the world's kings and emperors, when matched against Rome.

These were followed by perhaps yet more formidable adversaries, the men of genius and learning. The mere revival of literature in Italy involved an energetic protest against the popedom; but, to mention a few particular instances, Dante, the father of Italian poetry, boldly places the mightiest of the popes

lineage from the free lords of Hohenstaufen who were raised to the ducal dignity of Swabia in the eleventh century, and afterwards supplied several emperors. Previous to this, of the Franconian princes, Henry IV. in particular, had lived on very ill terms with pope Gregory, with whom he quarrelled about the appointment of bishops; yet being put under the ban by the pope, he had to submit to the disgraceful humiliation alluded to by the author in the text, and also in the 35th page. This, however, did not so intimidate subsequent emperors of the house of Hohenstaufen, and in particular Frederick Barbarossa and his grandson, Frederick II. as to deter them from resisting the power of the pope. Frederick II. though repeatedly placed under the papal ban, held out by force of arms, at the expense, however, of bequeathing the hatred of the popes to his descendants. His son, Conrad, could with difficulty maintain his power against the revolts excited against him, and was the last emperor of the family, while his grandson Conradin was deprived of his kingdom of Sicily, bestowed by the pope on the duke of Anjou, by whom he was beheaded.—L. R.

² See how pope Hildebrand himself relates this event: "*Tandem rex ad oppidum Canusii in quo morati sumus, cum paucis advenit, ibique per triduum ante portam, deposito omni regio cultu, miserabiliter, utpote discalceatus et laneis inductus, persistens, non prius cum multo fletu apostolicæ miserationis auxilium et consolatium implorare destitit, quam omnes qui ibi aderant, ad tantam pietatem et compassionis misericordiam movit, ut pro eo multis precibus et lacrymis intercedentes, omnes quidem insolitam nostræ mentis duritiam mirarentur, nonnulli vero non apostolicæ severitatis gravitatem, sed quasi tyrannicæ feritatis crudelitatem esse clamarent*" (Lib. iv. ep. 12; ad Germanos.)

in his hell; he makes the apostle Peter utter the severest and most humiliating language against his unworthy successors, and of the monks and the clergy he gives the most horrible description.

Another great genius, Petrarch, a man of a mind superior to all the emperors and popes of his time, boldly insisted on a return to the primitive constitution of the Church; and to effect this, calls upon the men of his time and the government of the emperor, Charles IV., to lend their assistance. Laurentius Valla, one of the most illustrious of the literary men of Italy, most energetically assailed both the pretensions of the popes and the pretended inheritance they hold from Constantine. These were followed by a whole legion of poets and of men of science and philosophy, and thus the torch of literature being everywhere rekindled, threatened to burn down the Roman scaffolding that obscured it. All these endeavours, however, were useless. Leo. X. took literature into his own service, and made poetry and the arts and sciences, as it were, the ministers and menials of his court, humbly kissing the feet of the very power which in their childish self-conceit they had vaunted that they could destroy.

At last there appeared an adversary which, more than any other, seemed capable of reforming the Church, and that was the Church itself. The call for reform now burst from all quarters, and had been sounding for ages, when there met at Constance, in the council that takes its name from that city, the most imposing of ecclesiastical assemblies. Christendom had never, indeed, known a meeting of the kind, that carried with it so much weight and authority; comprising, as it did, an immense number of cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, eighteen hundred priests and doctors of divinity, the emperor with a following of a thousand persons, the elector of Saxony, the elector Palatine, the dukes of Bavaria and Austria, and the ambassadors of all the other powers. Among these distinguished persons the chief place must be assigned to the illustrious and immortal doctors of the university of Paris, the d'Aillys, the Gersons, the Clemangis, men eminent at once for piety, learning, and moral courage, and who communicated an energetic and salutary impulsion to the council by the truths which they published, and the power with which they spoke. All gave way

before this assembly. With one hand it threw down three popes, while, with the other, it delivered John Huss to the flames. A commission, in which all nations had their deputies, was appointed to draw up the plan for a fundamental reform. To this measure the emperor Sigismond gave the whole weight of his influence. But one voice prevailed in the council. All the cardinals swore that whoever of them might be elected pope, should not break up the meeting, or leave Constance, until the reform so much called for, should be effected. Colonna was chosen under the name of Martin V. And now had arrived the critical moment which was to decide the reformation of the Church. All the prelates, the emperor, all the princes and all the nations of Christendom, were watching the result with inconceivable impatience. . . .

"The council is closed," exclaimed Martin V. the moment that his head received the tiara. Sigismond and the Church uttered a cry of mingled surprise, indignation, and grief; but the air closed upon this cry, and on the 16th of May, 1418, the pope appeared in full pontifical array, and mounted on a richly caparisoned mule. The emperor appears on his right and the elector of Brandenburg on his left, each holding the reins of his steed; four counts raise a magnificent canopy over the papal head; several princes flock round and lend their assistance; and a cavalcade, a historian informs us, of forty thousand persons, composed of noblemen, knights, and ecclesiastics of all ranks, in solemn state convoy the pontiff beyond the walls of Constance. And Rome, alone, on his mule, laughs in his sleeve at Christendom as it surrounds him, and tells him, that the charm he exercises is such, that it must be overcome, if at all, by some power other than emperors, kings, bishops, doctors; ay, than all the learning, and all the might, of that age and of the Church.

How could that which needed reform become itself the reforming power? How could the sore have found any healing virtue in itself?

Nevertheless, the means employed for the reformation of the Church, and which the event proved to be impotent, had their share in weakening obstacles, and in smoothing the way for the Reformers.

VI. The ills with which Christendom was now afflicted—superstition, infidelity, ignorance, idle speculations, and corruption of manners—all sprang naturally from man's own heart, and were no new thing on the earth. They had often figured in the history of the nations, and, especially in the East, had attacked various religions in the decline of their glory. To these evils such enervated religions had given way—had perished when thus smitten, and none had ever again raised its head.

Could it be that Christianity was to undergo the same fate, and that it, too, was to perish like the ancient popular religions? Was the stroke that had dealt death to them, to prove equally deadly to it? Was there no saving power to be found? Was it possible that the unfriendly forces that had begun to overwhelm it, after having crushed so many different kinds of worship, were to be suffered to settle down, unopposed, on the ruined Church of Jesus Christ?

No—Christianity has that which none of these popular religions possessed. What it presents to man is not, as with them, certain general ideas, mingled with traditions and fables, all fated, sooner or later, to fall before the attacks of human reason. It contains a pure truth, based on facts that are capable of bearing the examination of every honest and intelligent mind. Christianity aims not merely at the excitement in man of certain vague religious feelings, the impression made by which, when once lost, cannot be renewed; its object is to satisfy, and it does satisfy, all the religious yearnings of human nature, whatever the degree of development it may have reached. It is not man's work, for that is ever transient and evanescent; it is the work of God, who maintains what he creates, and the promises of its divine Author are the pledges of its durability.

Never can humanity obtain the ascendancy over Christianity. And if, for a time, the former has thought that it might dispense with the latter, yet soon does it appear again in all the freshness of a new life, as the only medicine that can heal men's souls; then do degenerate nations return with quite fresh eagerness to the ancient, simple, and yet mighty truths which, in the hour of their besotted folly, they had disdained.

In fact, Christianity put forth the same regenerating power in the sixteenth century which it had exerted in the first. After

the lapse of fifteen hundred years, the same truths produced the same effects; and in the days of the Reformation, as in those of Paul and of Peter, the gospel overcame immense obstacles, with resistless force. Its sovereign potency manifested itself from north to south, and among nations presenting every variety of manners, character, and intellectual development. Then, as in the time of Stephen and of James, it kindled the flame of enthusiasm and devotedness among extinct nations, and raised them even to the moral elevation of martyrdom.

Now, let us see how this vivification of the Church and of the world was effected. Here we observe the operation of two laws by which God at all times governs the world.

First, he makes slow and remote preparation for whatever he means to accomplish, and to effect which, all time is at his disposal.

Then, when the moment for executing his purposes has arrived, he effects the greatest objects by the most inconsiderable instruments. Thus does he act, both in nature and in history. When he means that a huge tree should extend its branches over the earth, he drops a small seed in the soil; when he means to renovate his Church, he employs the pettiest instrument to effect what has exceeded the capacity of emperors, and of the learned and eminent men of the Church. As we proceed with our research, we shall soon discover this small seed, planted by a divine hand at the time of the Reformation; but at present, we must set ourselves to discern and recognize the various means by which God prepared the way for this great revolution.

First, let us glance at the state of the popedom itself; and then pass under review the several influences which God made to concur in promoting his designs.

Just as the Reformation was ready to burst forth, Rome seemed to be in peace and safety. One might have said, indeed, that her triumph was now beyond the reach of being shaken; she was reposing, after having gained great victories. Councils general, which might be regarded as the parliamentary chambers, the upper and lower houses, of the Church, had been put down; the Vaudois and the Hussites had been repressed; no university, with the exception, perhaps, of that of Paris, which

at times would raise its voice on receiving the signal from its kings, disputed the infallibility of the oracles of Rome. Each seemed to accept his own share of her power. The higher clergy thought it better to allow the tenth of their revenues to go to a distant chief, and quietly to consume the other nine parts, rather than risk the whole for the sake of an independence which might cost them dear, and give them little in return. The lower clergy, lured by the prospect of the brilliant places which ambition pictured forth to them in the distance, willingly consented to a little bondage while indulging expectations so flattering to their vanity. They were, moreover, almost everywhere so oppressed by the chiefs of the hierarchy, that they dared hardly stir their wings under such powerful hands; far less, resolutely throw off the pressure and make head against them. As for the people, they bowed their knees at the Roman altar; and even the kings themselves, although they had begun secretly to despise the bishop of Rome, dared not raise what that age would have called a sacrilegious hand against his power.

But although when the Reformation broke forth, opposition from without seems to have declined, or even altogether ceased, it had been collecting inward vigour; and on a closer inspection of the edifice, we shall discover that it showed more than one symptom of its approaching ruin. Thus, even in their fall, general councils had diffused their principles throughout the Church, and had carried division into the camp of their opponents. The defenders of the hierarchy split into two parties: those who, on Hildebrand's principles, maintained the absolute domination of the pope, and those who were for a constitutional popedom, reserving securities and franchises to the churches.

More than this: faith in the Roman bishop's infallibility had received a violent shock; and if no voice was lifted against it, this arose from each rather endeavouring anxiously to retain whatever small remains of faith he had. The slightest shake caused alarm, because it was thought that it might bring down the whole edifice. Christendom held its breath, but only to prevent a disaster in the midst of which it might have trembled for its existence. But from the moment that man trembles to think of giving up a long revered persuasion, he proves that he no

longer really possesses it; nor will he very long keep up even the appearance which he wants to maintain.

Let us see how this singular condition of things was brought about.

Its first cause is to be found in the Church itself. Not that the errors and superstitions which it had introduced into Christianity, were what properly had inflicted a fatal blow. Christendom behoved to have been placed above the Church in point of intellectual and religious developement, in order to have the capacity for judging in this respect. But there was an order of things level to the capacity of the laity, and it was there that the Church was judged. She had become worldly. That sacerdotal empire which lorded it over the nations, and which subsisted only because its subjects were deceived and thought that its crown was a glory, had forgotten its true nature. Leaving heaven and its spheres of light and glory, it had immersed itself in the vulgar concerns of burghers and of princes. Born representatives of the Spirit, the priests had bartered it for the flesh; and abandoned the treasures of learning, and the spiritual power of preaching, for brute force and the tinsel of this world.

All this happened very naturally. True, it was the spiritual order of things that the Church first stood forth to defend. But for its defence against the resistance and the attacks of the nations, she had sought the aid of those earthly means, and vulgar arms, which a false prudence had induced her to employ. Once that the Church set herself to the handling of such arms, it was all over with her spirituality. Her arm could not become a secular one without her heart becoming so also; and forthwith, the original state of things with her was perceived to be apparently reversed. Beginning with the intention of calling in the earth for the defence of heaven, she ended with making use of heaven in defending the earth. The forms of a theocracy were no longer anything better in her hands than the means of accomplishing worldly undertakings. The offerings which the tribes of Christendom laid before the sovereign pontiff, served but to pamper his luxurious court and to pay his soldiers. The charm was dissipated, and the Church became an impotent thing from the moment the men of this world could say, "She has become like unto us."

The great were the first to scrutinize the titles of this imaginary power.¹ Such an inquest might have sufficed for her exposure and ruin; but happily for her, the education of princes was everywhere in the hands of her adepts. These were sure to instil into their august pupils sentiments of veneration for the Roman pontiff. The chiefs of the nations spent their early years in the sanctuary of the Church; princes of ordinary capacity never knew how to come altogether out of it; not a few desired nothing more than to find themselves there at the moment of their death. They liked better to die under a priest's frock than under a crown.

No country contributed more than Italy, that apple of discord to the rest of Europe, to open the eyes of kings. With the popes they had to form alliances in which, not the bishop of bishops, but the temporal ruler of the States of the Church, was the person really concerned. In the course of such transactions, they discovered that these pretended organs of the truth, had recourse to all the petty artifices of politics—to deception, to dissimulation, and even to perjury.² Then it was that the bandage with which education had hoodwinked the eyes of princes, fell off. Then did the adroit Ferdinand of Aragon³ play off stratagem against stratagem. Then did the impetuous Louis XII. cause a medal to be struck with this legend: *Perdam Babylonis nomen*.⁴ And the honest Maximilian of Austria, grieved to the heart on being informed of Leo X.'s treachery, openly declared: "This pope, too, is in my eyes no better than

¹ Adrien Baillet, *Histoire des démêlés de Boniface VIII. avec Philippe le Bel*, (Paris, 1708.)

² Guicciardini, *History of Italy*.

³ Ferdinand of Aragon is celebrated in history on various accounts. By his marriage with Isabella, queen of Castile, he united all Spain into one kingdom, absolutely annihilated the dominion which the Moors had held in Spain ever since the eighth century, put down the robberies and oppressions of the great, and introduced a better order of things. He extended his authority into other lands also, became proverbial for craftiness, and showed great apparent zeal in the cause of religion, by persecuting the Jews and introducing the Inquisition. All this procured for him the surname of "the Catholic," yet he not the less fell under the suspicion of the popes, who distrusted his cunning, and thought with others that he aimed at universal empire. Louis XII. of France was a high-spirited monarch. He was occasionally outwitted by Ferdinand, and was not afraid to oppose the pope, having even summoned pope Julius II. to appear before a meeting of cardinals at Pisa: though afterwards, when under the necessity of procuring peace, he humbled himself before the pope.—L. R.

⁴ I will destroy the name of Babylon.

a felon. Now I can say that not one pope, during my whole life, has kept faith with me, and been true to his word. . . . I hope, if God please, that this will be the last.”¹

Such discoveries, though first made by kings, gradually reached and influenced the people under them. But several other causes opened the long-closed eyes of Christendom. The wisest began to accustom themselves to the notion that the bishop of Rome was a mere man, and sometimes a very wicked man. The common people began to suspect that he was not a great deal holier than his bishops, and their reputation was very equivocal. The popes themselves, however, did more than all beside, to make themselves dishonoured; for when the Council of Basel had freed them from all restraint, they gave themselves over to that unbridled license which ordinarily follows a victory. The very Romans, dissolute as they were, felt shocked at this; the scandal caused by these excesses passed from mouth to mouth throughout all Christendom; and its inhabitants, though incompetent to the task of preventing their treasures being swept off into this deluge of profligacy, sought compensation in hatred.²

While many circumstances concurred in undermining what then existed, the tendency of others was to introduce something new.

The strange theological system then established in the Church, could not fail to contribute powerfully to the opening of the eyes of the new generation. This system, made for an age of darkness as if that age were to subsist for ever, must have been left behind and destroyed in all its parts, as society moved forward. Such was actually the case. The popes had made now one, now another, addition to the doctrines of Christianity, but had altered or expunged only what would not square with their hierarchy; while whatever was found not inconsistent with their plan, was suffered to remain until farther orders. True doctrines were to be found in this system, such as that of the redemption, and of the power of the Spirit of God, and with

¹ Scultet. Annal. ad an. 1520.

² “*Odium Romani nominis penitus infixum esse multarum gentium animis opinor, ob ea quæ vulgo de moribus ejus urbis jactantur,*” (Erasmi Epistol. lib. xii. p. 634.)

these a skilful theologian might attack and subvert all the rest. The pure gold that was mingled with vile lead in the Vatican treasury, could easily make the fraud appear evident; and although it be true that when any one had the courage to notice it, Rome straightway winnowed this good grain out of her threshing-floor, still these very condemnations only increased the chaos.

Immense, indeed, was that chaos, and pretended unity was but one vast disorder. At Rome itself there were the doctrines of the court and the doctrines of the Church. Then, the creed of the metropolis differed from that of the provinces, and the diversity that prevailed in these went almost to infinity. There was the creed of the princes, the creed of the people, and the creed of the religious orders, among which people distinguished the opinions of such a convent, such a district, such a doctor, or such a monk.

In order to secure its existence during the period when Rome might have crushed it with her iron mace, truth had done like the insect when it incloses itself in its chrysalis during the wintry season; and, strange to say, the means which this divine verity had employed in thus shrouding itself from assault, were the very schoolmen who have been so much decried. These industrious artificers of thought, had set themselves to the spinning out of all the ideas known in theology, and with the threads thus formed, they had made a network, within which it had been most difficult for their subtlest contemporaries to recognise the truth in its primitive purity. One may complain that an insect, full of life and sometimes sparkling in the brightest colours, should shut itself up, to all appearance dead, in an obscure cone; but to that it owes its preservation. And so it was with truth. Had Rome, with her interested and suspicious policy, encountered it in the days of her might, in its naked state, she would have destroyed, or at least attempted to destroy it. But while disguised as it had been by the theologians of that age, in an interminable web of subtilties and distinctions, the popes either did not perceive it at all, or thought that in that state it could never hurt them. They even protected both the workmen and their work. But spring-time might come round, and then truth might rise from its concealment, and cast off the threads that

enveloped it. With the fresh energies it had acquired in what was apparently a tomb, its rising again might soon be followed by a victory over Rome and her errors. This spring-time did come round. And while the absurd wrappings of the schoolmen gave way, one after another, before the able attacks and the sneering ridicule of the new generation, the truth, in all its freshness and loveliness, escaped and was free.

But it was not only from the writings of the schoolmen that the truth received powerful testimonies in its favour. Christianity, it may be remarked, had everywhere mingled some of her own vitality in that of the nations. The Church of Christ was, indeed, a degraded structure; but when men began to dig into its foundations, they so far discovered the living rock on which it was originally built. Several institutions dating from the good times of the Church, still subsisted, and could not but call forth in many souls such evangelical sentiments as opposed the dominant superstition. Here and there would a solitary voice fall upon the ear from inspired men, and from the Church's ancient teachers; and we may hope that it was listened to in silence by more than one attentive hearer. Let us not doubt, and it is a delightful reflection, that Christians had many brothers and sisters in those monasteries, where people are too ready to perceive nothing but hypocrisy and dissoluteness.

Nor was it only things old that smoothed the way for this religious awakening; there was something new which must have powerfully favoured it. The human mind was growing older, and this single fact must have brought about its enfranchisement.¹ The shrub, as it advances in its growth, overturns the walls near which it was planted, and for their shadow substitutes its own. The Roman pontiff had taken advantage of his superiority in point of intelligence, to reduce the nations to a state of pupilage under him, and while he kept them long in minority, he knew, also, how to keep them obedient to his will. But they were now becoming men, and escaped from his grasp on every side. This venerable guardianship, which had its first cause in the principles of everlasting life and of civilization com-

¹ In this and sundry other expressions we see how difficult it is for a Christian author altogether to escape from the philosophical cant of the day. Any such advance of the human mind is a dream of modern philosophy. TR.

municated by Rome to nations of barbarians, could no longer go on unopposed, for a formidable adversary had now placed itself in a position to watch and control it. We find this new power in the natural proneness of the human mind to develope its powers, to examine and to inform itself. Men's eyes were now opening, and they wanted to have reasons for every step which they took by the direction of this long respected guide, under whom they had been seen for ages, and as long as their eyes were shut, to move without a word of remonstrance. The tribes of a new Europe had now passed the period of their childhood; their adult age was commencing; and the childlike simplicity which had been ready to believe everything, had now given place to an inquiring mind and to a reason which was impatient of all imperfect knowledge. People now inquired what God's object had been in speaking to the world, and if men had any right to place themselves as mediators between God and their brethren.

The Church had but one means of safety; and this lay in maintaining its ascendancy over the nations. It was not enough that it should be on a level with them, yet it found itself greatly overtopped. At the very time these began to mount, it began to go down; as men in general were gradually rising towards the domain of intelligence, the priesthood found themselves absorbed with earthly pursuits and human interests. Such a phenomenon repeatedly meets us in history. The eagle's wings had grown, and no one could be found with a powerful enough hand to prevent its spreading them for flight.

While in Europe itself the light was thus bursting from the prison in which it had long remained captive, the East began to shed a new radiance over the West. This was caused by the flight of the learned from Constantinople on the standard of the Osmanlis being planted on the walls of that city, in 1453; and their carrying with them into Italy the literature of Greece. Minds that had been extinct for ages, now caught flame from the torch of the ancients. Printing, then a late invention, multiplied the energetic protests raised against the corruptions of the Church, as well as those not less potent voices which called the human mind into new paths. It seemed as if errors and vain practices, were exposed to view in one bright jet of light. It

was a light, however, which though sufficiently adapted to destroy was incapable of building up again. It never could be the vocation either of Homer or of Virgil, to save the Church.

In short, the principle of the Reformation is not at all to be found in the revival of literature, and of the sciences and arts. The paganism of the poets when it re-appeared in Italy, was more likely to bring back the paganism of the heart. When vain superstitions were attacked and gave way, they were succeeded only by infidelity with its scornful sneers; so that it became the fashion and was thought the mark of a superior mind, to laugh at everything, not excepting things the most sacred. Religion was looked upon merely as a means of governing the people. "I have my fears," exclaimed Erasmus in 1516, "that with the study of ancient literature, we may see the return of ancient paganism."

It is true that then, just as after the sneering age of Augustus, and as, in our own days, after the irreligious scoffs of the last century, a new Platonic philosophy was seen to pierce the soil, and attracted attention by attacking this impudent incredulity, and endeavouring, like the philosophy of the present day, to produce a certain respect for Christianity and to revive religious feelings in the hearts of men. The Medici family, at Florence, gave their countenance to these efforts of the Platonists, but never will a philosophical religion regenerate the Church or the world. In its haughty contempt for the preaching of the cross, and its affectation of seeing nothing but figures and symbols in the doctrines of Christianity, to the greater number of men it becomes incomprehensible, and may evaporate in a mystical enthusiasm, but will ever prove incapable of reforming men in this world or of saving them in the next.

What, then, would have been the result, had true Christianity not re-appeared in the world, and had faith failed to replenish men's hearts with its moral power and purity? The Reformation saved religion, and with religion society itself; so that if the Church of Rome had had God's glory and man's welfare really at heart, she would have greeted it with joy. But what cared Leo X. for either?

Very different from its consequences in Italy and France were those that followed the study of ancient literature in Ger-

many. In the latter country that study was mingled with faith, and hence what in the one case had only produced a certain refinement of the understanding, minute in effort and barren in results, peneirated and pervaded men's whole minds in the other case, warming their hearts and preparing them for receiving a yet better illumination. The first restorers of literature in Italy and in France, were notorious for the levity,—often even for the downright immorality, of their conduct; whereas the men who succeeded them in Germany, were of a serious turn, and zealously devoted themselves to the search of truth. While offering her incense to profane literature and science, Italy beheld the rise of an infidel opposition; Germany, too, while engrossed with a profound theology and thrown back on herself, beheld the rise of an opposition, but it was one replete with faith. There the foundations of the Church were undermined—here they were laid anew and restored. A remarkable union of free, learned, and generous men took place in the empire;—men among whom some princes occupied a conspicuous place, and who endeavoured to make learning the handmaid of religion. Some of these worthies brought to their studies the humble faith of children; the minds of others were intelligent and penetrating, and disposed, perhaps, to go beyond the legitimate bounds of liberty and criticism; yet both helped to clear away from the entrance to the temple, the obstructions caused by such a mass of superstitions.

The monkish theologians saw themselves in danger, and raised a clamour against the same studies which in Italy and France they had tolerated, because pursued in these countries in union with levity and immorality. A conspiracy was now formed among them against the languages and sciences; for behind these, faith arose and scared them. A monk, warning some one against the heresies of Erasmus, was asked in what they consisted? He admitted that he had never read the work alluded to, and could say but one thing of it, that it was written in too good Latin.

VII. All these extrinsic causes, however, would not have sufficed to mature matters for the renovation of the Church. Christianity had declined owing to the abandonment of the two grand doctrines of the new covenant. The former of these, in

opposition to the authority of the Church, maintains the direct contact of every soul with the divine source of truth; the latter, in opposition to the merit of human works, is the doctrine of salvation by grace. Now, which of these two principles—principles unchangeable and undying, for though disowned and modified they had never ceased to exist—are we to find taking the initiative and giving the regenerating impulse? Is it the first,—the ecclesiastical idea? Or the second,—the spiritual idea? People pretend, in our days, to go from the social condition to the soul; from humanity to the individual; and, accordingly, we might suppose that the first in order, must be the ecclesiastical idea. But history demonstrates the reverse, for it proves that it is by individual action that we operate upon the collective mass, and that if we would regenerate the social condition, we must, first of all, regenerate the soul. All the attempts at reform presented to us by the middle ages, are associated with some religious view, and the question of authority was never approached except when this was rendered indispensable in order to defend truth, when discovered, against the hierarchy. And thus it was at a later period with Luther himself. Saving truth being perceived on the one side, supported by the authority of the word of God, and destroying error on the other side, with the authority of the Roman hierarchy in its favour, there was no room for long suspense, and the question of authority came soon to be settled, in spite of the most specious sophisms and of proofs apparently the most evident.

The Church had fallen because deprived of the grand doctrine of justification by faith in the Saviour; and, if she were ever to rise again, it could only be by having that doctrine restored. From the time of the re-establishment in Christendom of that fundamental truth, all the errors and practices that had usurped its place—that whole multitude of saints, pious works, penances, masses, indulgences, and so forth, necessarily disappeared. No sooner were the one sole Mediator, and his one sole sacrifice, acknowledged, than all other mediators and sacrifices were obliterated. "This article of justification," said onewhom we must regard as an enlightened authority on the subject,¹ "is that which created the Church, and which nourishes, edifies, preserves, and defends

¹ Luther to Brentius.

it. No man who does not steadfastly hold by this truth, can teach in the Church to any good purpose, or successfully resist an adversary." "It is there," the same writer adds, alluding to the earliest prophecy, "it is there that we find the heel that bruises the serpent's head."

God, who was preparing his work, raised up, in the course of centuries, a long succession of witnesses to the truth; yet, in giving this testimony, these generous men had not a sufficiently clear knowledge of the truth themselves, or, at least, knew not how to exhibit it to others with sufficient clearness. They were fitting harbingers of a work which they could not themselves accomplish; but let us add, that if they were not ready for the work, neither was the work ready for them. The measure was not yet full; time had not yet fulfilled its prescribed course; there was not as yet by any means a generally enough felt need of the true remedy.

In fact, instead of hewing down the tree at its root, by preaching, mainly and emphatically, the doctrine of salvation by grace, they occupied themselves about ceremonies, church-government, the order of worship, the adoration of saints and their images, transubstantiation, and so forth. Confining themselves to the branches of the tree, they might succeed in pruning it here and there, but still they left it standing. In order to there being a wholesome reformation without, there behoved to be a true reformation within, and that was what faith alone could effect.

Hardly had Rome usurped the government of the Church, than there was formed against her a powerful opposition which ran through the middle ages.

Claud, archbishop of Turin, in the ninth century; Peter of Bruys, his disciple, Henry, and Arnold of Brescia in the twelfth century, in France and in Italy, sought to re-establish the worship of God in spirit and in truth: this object, however, they confined too much to the mere doing away of the worship of images and of external practices.

The mystics, who have existed almost in every age, while silently endeavouring after holiness of heart, righteousness of life, and calm communion with God, looked around with sorrow and alarm at the desolations of the Church. Carefully abstaining from the scholastic quarrels and useless discussions beneath

which true piety had been buried, they made it their endeavour to turn away men from the vain mechanism of outward ceremonies, in order to bring them to that deep repose of the soul which seeks all its happiness in God; and this they could not do, without impugning accredited opinions at all points, and lifting off the vail that concealed the Church's sore. But, at the same time, they had no clear view of the doctrine of justification by faith.

Much superior to the mystics in point of purity of doctrine, were the Vaudois, who formed a long chain of witnesses to the truth. Men enjoying more freedom than the rest of the Church, seem from ancient times to have inhabited the summits of the Alps of Piedmont, and had their numbers increased, and their doctrines purified, by the disciples of Valdo. For a succession of ages the Vaudois, from their mountain heights, protested against the superstitions of Rome.¹ "They struggled for the living hope they had in God by Christ; for the inward regeneration and renewing by faith, hope, and charity; for the merits of Jesus Christ, and the all-sufficiency of his grace and of his righteousness."²

Nevertheless, this primary truth of the sinner's justification; this capital doctrine, which ought to have risen from amid all their other doctrines, like Mont-blanc from the bosom of the Alps, does not sufficiently predominate in their system. The peak is not sufficiently elevated.

Peter Vaud or Valdo, a rich merchant of Lyons (1170), sold all his possessions and gave the produce to the poor. He, and his friends likewise, seemed to have aimed at the restoration in actual life of the perfection of primitive Christianity. He began, then, with the branches; not with the roots. Yet his preaching was powerful, for he appealed to scripture, and it shook the Roman hierarchy to its foundations.

Wicliff appeared in England in 1360, and made his appeal from the pope to the word of God, but the true inward disease of the Church's body was, in his eyes, only one of the numerous symptoms of its malady.

¹ Nobla Leygon.

² Tract on Antichrist contemporaneous with the Noble Lesson.

John Huss spoke in Bohemia a century earlier than Luther did in Saxony; and he appears to have gone deeper than all his precursors into the essence of Christian truth. He beseeches Christ to give him grace to glorify him only in his cross, and in the inappreciable shame of his sufferings. Practically, however, he attacks, not so much the Roman Church's errors, as the scandalous living of the clergy. Still, he was, one may say, the John the Baptist of the Reformation. The flames amid which he expired, kindled a conflagration in the Church which threw an immense blaze of light into the surrounding darkness, and the embers of which could not be extinguished as promptly as they were kindled.

John Huss did more: prophetic words went forth from the recesses of his dungeon. He had a presentiment that a real reformation of the Church was at hand. Even before this, when, on his expulsion from Prague, he was obliged to wander in the fields of Bohemia, where he was followed by a vast crowd, eagerly devouring his words, he exclaimed: "The wicked have begun by preparing perfidious nets for the goose.¹ But if even the goose, which is but a domestic bird, a peaceable animal, incapable of taking any long flight, has nevertheless broken their gins, other birds, boldly soaring towards the heavens, will burst them with yet greater force. Instead of the feeble goose, truth will send forth eagles and falcons with piercing ken."² The Reformers fulfilled this prediction.

And when the venerable priest was summoned by Sigismund's orders to appear before the Council of Constance, when he was thrown into prison, he was more taken up about Bethlehem chapel in which he had preached the gospel and the coming triumphs of Christ, than about his own defence. The holy martyr thought he saw one night as he lay in his cell, the representations of Jesus Christ which he had caused to be painted on the walls of his oratory, obliterated by the pope and his bishops. The dream made him sad; but next day he saw several painters at work restoring the effaced paintings in greater number, and more brightly than before. When their task was done, these painters, surrounded by a vast concourse of people, exclaimed:

¹ Huss means *goose* in the Bohemian tongue.

² Epist. J. Huss, tempore anathematis scriptæ.

"Let popes and bishops come now, but never shall they efface them more." "And many nations rejoiced in Bethlehem, and I with them," adds John Huss. "Attend to your defence rather than to reveries," said his faithful friend, the knight of Chlum, to whom he had told his dream. "I am no vain dreamer," replied Huss, "but this I hold for certain, that the image of Christ never shall be effaced. They would fain have destroyed it, but it shall be painted anew in men's hearts by more worthy preachers than me. The nation that loves Christ shall rejoice at this. And as for me, awaking from among the dead, and being resuscitated, so to speak, from the tomb, I shall be transported with exceeding joy."¹

A century passed away, and the torch of the gospel, on being rekindled by the Reformers, did, in fact, enlighten many nations which rejoiced in its light.

But it is not only among such as the Church of Rome regarded as her adversaries that a life-giving word was heard during those ages. Catholicity herself, let us say so for our consolation, counted many witnesses to the truth within her pale. The original building had, indeed, been consumed; but a generous fire still smouldered under the ashes, and from time to time bright sparks might be observed to escape from it.

Anselm of Canterbury, in a writing on preparation for death, says to the dying: "Look only to the merit of Jesus Christ."

A monk, called Arnoldi, daily offered up in his quiet cell this fervent prayer: "O my Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that thou alone art my redemption and my righteousness."²

Christopher of Utenheim, a pious bishop of Basel, made his name be inscribed on a picture painted on glass, which is still at Basel, and around it he had this motto inscribed, as what he wished to have ever before his eyes: "My hope is the cross of Christ; I seek for grace and not for works."³

Brother Martin, a poor Chartreux, wrote an affecting confession, in which he says: "O most charitable God! I know that I cannot be saved and satisfy thy justice but by the

¹ Epist. J. Huss, sub tempore concilii scriptæ.

² Credo quod tu, mi Domine Jesu Christe, solus es mea justitia et redemptio. . . (Leibnitz script. Brunsw. iii. 396.)

³ Spes mea crux Christi; gratiam, non opera quero.

merits, the most innocent passion, and the death, of thy well-beloved Son. . . . Pious Jesus! my whole salvation is in thy hands. Thou canst not turn away from me the hands of thy love, for they created, they formed, and they have redeemed me. With a pen of iron, with much mercy, and in a manner not to be effaced, thou hast inscribed my name on thy side, on thy hands, and on thy feet," &c. &c. The good Chartreux then placed this confession in a wooden box, and shut up the box in a hole which he had made in the wall of his cell.¹

Never would friar Martin's piety have been known, had not his box been found on the 21st of December, 1776, at the taking down of some old walls, once forming part of a Chartreux monastery at Basel. How many monasteries may have concealed such treasures?

These holy men, however, had this touching faith only for themselves, and they knew not how to communicate it to others. As they lived retired from the world, they could say more or less what the good friar Martin wrote in his box: "*Et si hæc prædicta confiteri non possim linguâ, confiteor tamen corde et scripto.*" Although I cannot confess these things with my tongue, yet I confess them with my heart and in writing." The word of truth was in the sanctuary of some pious souls; but to use an expression to be found in the gospel, it had no free course in the world.

Meanwhile, although there might be no open confession of the doctrine of salvation, there were men, even in the very midst of the Church of Rome, who ventured at least openly to denounce the abuses that disgraced that Church; and Italy herself was not without witnesses against the priesthood. The Dominican, Savonarola, at Florence, in 1498, rose against the insupportable vices of Rome. But the torture, the stake, and the inquisition soon put him down.

Geiler, of Kaisersberg, was for three and thirty years the great preacher of Germany. He vigorously attacked the clergy. "Seariness of leaf in a tree," said he, "shows that it is diseased at the root; and so does an immoral people indicate a corrupt

¹ *Sciens posse me non aliter salvari et tibi satisfacere nisi per meritum, etc.* (See, for these quotations, and others resembling them, Flacius Catal. Test. Veritatis: Wolfii Lectiones memorabiles; Müller's Reliquien, &c. &c.)

priesthood." "If a dissolute man ought not to say mass," said he to a bishop, "then banish all the priests from your diocese." While listening to this courageous minister, the people became accustomed to see even in the very sanctuary itself, the vail withdrawn that covered the turpitudes of their guides.

It is of importance that we mark this state of things in the Church. On the wisdom that is from above beginning anew to present its lessons, there will everywhere be found minds to understand and hearts to feel them. On the sower going forth anew to sow, he will find the soil prepared to receive the seed. On the word of truth coming to be sounded, it will find echoes to repeat the sound. On the trumpet giving a certain sound in the Church, many of her children will prepare themselves for battle.

VIII. We have now nearly reached the scene on which Luther appeared. But before we begin the history of that great commotion which caused the long-smothered light of truth to burst forth in all its lustre; which in renovating the Church, renovated so many nations, called others into existence, and created a new Europe and a new Christendom; let us cast a glance at the state at that time of the various nations in the midst of which this great revolution was effected.

The empire was a confederation of various states, headed by an emperor, but each exercising sovereignty on its own territory. For the totality of the German confederation, legislative authority was exercised by the imperial diet, composed of all the princes or sovereign states. The laws, decrees, and minutes of this assembly, required the ratification of the emperor, who was charged with the publication and execution of them. The privilege of decreeing who should wear the imperial crown, belonged to the seven most powerful princes, bearing the title of electors.

Liberty had advanced most in the north of Germany, which was chiefly inhabited by the old Saxon race. Unceasingly attacked in his hereditary possessions by the Turks, the emperor found it necessary to deal gently with those courageous princes and tribes, whose assistance had become indispensable to him. Then there were free cities on the north, the west, and the south of the empire, which by their trade, their manufactures,

their industry of every kind, had reached a high degree of prosperity, and by that means even of independence also. The potent house of Austria which then wore the imperial crown, held subject to its beck the greater number of the states of the south of Germany, and was near enough closely to observe all their movements. It was preparing itself for extending its domination over the whole empire, and even beyond that, when the Reformation arrived, opposed a mighty obstacle to its encroachments, and saved the independence of Europe.

Now, had any one asked, in the times of Paul, or in those of Ambrose, of Augustine, and of Chrysostom, or those even of Anselm and of Bernard, what people God would employ for the reformation of the Church, one would have thought perhaps of the apostolic countries, so illustrious in the history of Christianity, of Asia, Greece, or Rome; perhaps, also, of that Great Britain, or of that France, where mighty doctors had lifted up their voices; but never should any one have guessed that it would be the barbarous Germans. All other Christian countries had shone each in its turn in the Church; Germany alone had remained obscure, and yet it was Germany that was chosen.

The same God who for four thousand years had prepared for the coming of his Messiah, and who made the people among whom he was destined to be born, to pass through diverse dispensations during a course of ages, prepared Germany, also, while other nations knew not of it, and without being in the least aware of it herself, for becoming the cradle of that religious regeneration which was ultimately to re-awaken the several tribes of Christendom.

As Judea, the birth-place of Christianity, lay in the middle of the ancient world, thus did Germany lie in the centre of Christendom. It presented itself at once to the Netherlands, England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, Denmark, and the whole of the North. It was in the heart of Europe that the principle of life was to be developed, and its pulsations were to cause the generous blood, destined to vivify every member of that vast body, to circulate through all its arteries.

The particular constitution which the empire had received, conformably with the dispensations of providence, favoured the

propagation of new ideas. Had Germany, like France or England, been a monarchy properly so called, the arbitrary will of the sovereign might have sufficed to lay a long arrest on the progress of the gospel. But it was a confederation, and thus the truth though combated in one state, might be favourably received in another. Mighty centres of illumination which might gradually pierce through the darkness, and enlighten the inhabitants all around, were capable of being speedily established at various points in the Empire.

The internal peace which Maximilian succeeded in securing for the Empire, was no less favourable. For long had the numerous members of the Germanic body thought fit to tear one another in pieces, and there had been nothing seen but troubles, discords, perpetually reviving wars of neighbours with neighbours, cities with cities, and feudal lords with feudal lords. Maximilian had placed public order upon a solid basis by the institution of the imperial chamber, which was appointed to determine judicially all differences arising among the states. Thus the German tribes beheld the commencement of a new era of security and repose—a state of things powerfully tending to soften and to civilize the national spirit. Throughout the now pacificated cities and rural districts of the Germans, one might search out and introduce ameliorations which the continuance of discord would have banished; and, besides, it is in the bosom of peace that the gospel loves to achieve its triumphs. Thus was it that, fifteen centuries before, God desired that Augustus should present the whole world, in a state of peace, to the benignant conquests of the religion of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the Reformation played a double part in the peace which the empire then began to enjoy. It was at once a cause and an effect. Germany still presented to the observer's eye, at the time of Luther's appearance, the heavy swell that continues to agitate the sea after a course of boisterous weather. So uncertain, too, was the calm that the first breeze might freshen into a new storm. Of this we shall see more than one example. But in giving an impulse altogether new to the German tribes, the Reformation destroyed for ever the old causes of agitation; put an end to the barbarism that till then had predominated, and gave a new system to Europe.

The religion of Jesus Christ had at the same time exercised over Germany an influence peculiar to itself. There had been a rapid development of the third estate, or commons; and in the several countries of the empire, and particularly in the free towns, numerous institutions were to be seen, fitted to call forth the capacities of this imposing mass of the people. There the arts were flourishing; there the burgess class devoted itself in security, to the calm employments and endearing relationships of social life. Becoming more and more accessible to information, it was rising to more and more respect and influence. The Reformation was to have its foundations laid in Germany, not by magistrates who are often led to bend their conduct to political exigencies, or by nobles devoted above all things to military renown, or by a greedy and ambitious clergy, turning religion to their own purposes as if it were their exclusive property, but this great task was to belong to the burgesses, the people, the nation at large.

The particular character of the Germans must have specially fitted them to be the subject of a religious reform. They had not been diluted by a false civilisation; precious seeds sown by the fear of God, had not been scattered to the winds; the manners of the olden time still subsisted; and there was to be found in Germany that straightforward honesty, that fidelity, that love of toil, that perseverance, that religious disposition which may still be found there, and which augur better for the gospel's success than the levity, and the sneering or gross character of other nations of Europe.

Another circumstance, too, possibly contributed to make Germany a soil more favourable than many other countries for the renovation of Christianity. God had watched over it. He had preserved for it the strength required for the day of bringing forth. It had not been seen to fall away from the faith after an epoch of spiritual vigour, as had been the case with the nations of Asia, Greece, Italy, France, and Great Britain. The gospel had never been introduced into Germany in its original purity, for her earliest missionaries brought to her a religion which in various respects had been vitiated. What Boniface and his successors brought to the Frisians, the Saxons, and other German tribes, was an ecclesiastical law, a spiritual discipline; and

they remained almost as ignorant as ever of faith in the glad tidings; that faith which gladdens man's heart, and makes him truly free. Instead of becoming corrupt, the religion of the Germans had rather become more pure; instead of having backslidden, she had rather advanced. We might well look for more life and spiritual vigour in such a people, than among nations which had fallen from Christianity, in which deep darkness had succeeded the illumination of truth, and where an all but universal corruption had taken the place of the sanctity of primitive times.

An analogous remark may be made on the external relations of the German nation with the Church. The Germans had received the faith, that grand element of modern civilization, from Rome; to the priestly city they were indebted for culture of mind and manners, for the various branches of knowledge, for legislation, in short, for everything but their courage and their arms. Hence arose strict ties of intimacy between Germany and the popedom. The former was, as it were, a spiritual conquest of the latter, and we know what Rome has ever contrived to make of her conquests. Other nations having had both faith and civilization before the Roman pontiff so much as existed, they remained with respect to him in a condition of greater independence. Now, this subjugation of the Germans could not fail to make the re-action, when she awoke, more overpowering. On the eyes of Germany being opened, we shall find her indignantly tearing off the swaddling bands in which she had been so long held captive; the servitude to which she had so long to submit, will be found to have given her a more intense longing for deliverance and for liberty, and sturdy champions of truth will be found going forth from the house of restraint and discipline in which her whole people had been detained for ages.

On a nearer survey of the times of the Reformation, we shall find in the government of Germany, new reasons for admiring the wisdom of Him by whom kings reign and governments are instituted. There then prevailed what had a pretty close resemblance to what, in the political language of France at the present day, is called "the see-saw system." When the empire's chief was a man of strong mind, his influence increased, but

when, on the contrary, he happened to be a weak person, it was the influence and authority of the princes and the electors that increased; and it was chiefly under Charles the V.th's predecessor, Maximilian, that this kind of up and down was remarked giving the advantage, sometimes to the one, and sometimes to the other of these parties. At that time it was altogether to the disadvantage of the emperor. The princes often formed intimate alliances with one another, and the emperors themselves used to solicit such alliances with them, in the view of having their assistance in combatting some common enemy. Now, the force which the princes drew from such alliances in resisting some transient danger, might, at another time, be turned against the encroachments and the power of the emperor. This was what now took place. Never did the princes feel themselves stronger, as a body opposed to their chief, than at the epoch of the Reformation; and as that chief took part against it, we may easily see how favourable this circumstance was to the propagation of the gospel.

Moreover, Germany was now tired of what Rome used to call in derision "the patience of the Germans." Much patience, indeed, had the Germans shown since the days of Louis of Bavaria; the emperors having, from that time forth, laid down their arms, and allowed the tiara unopposed to take the precedence of the crown of the Cæsars. But the struggle still continued, although it had changed its ground. It had come down several stages, the same strivings for the mastery which had been exhibited to the world by emperors and popes, being soon renewed, on a smaller scale, between the bishops and magistrates of all the cities of Germany. The burgess class had taken up the sword which the chiefs of the empire had allowed to slip from their grasp. So early as in 1329, the burgesses of Francfort on the Oder had intrepidly made head against all their ecclesiastical superiors, and when excommunicated for having remained faithful to the margrave, Louis,¹ continued for eight

¹ This prince was elected emperor of Germany in the first part of the fourteenth century, and had for his competitor Frederick the Fair, arch duke of Austria, grandson of Rudolph of Hapsburg, first arch-duke of Austria, and the first of that house, too, that was raised to the imperial dignity. The contest was decided in favour of Louis of Bavaria by a battle fought at Muhlendorf in the country of Saltsburg. The pope afterwards declared Louis's election to be

and twenty years without priests to say mass, baptize, marry, or bury them. Nay, on the return of the monks and priests, they had laughed at them as they would have done at a farce or comedy. These were sad doings, but the clergy were themselves the cause. At the time of the Reformation, the opposition between the magistrates and the ecclesiastics had increased and become so angry, that the temporal privileges and pretensions of the latter were perpetually producing rubs and collisions between the two bodies. If the magistrates refused to yield, the bishops and priests imprudently ran into extreme measures, the disposal of which was in their own hands. Sometimes the pope would interfere, and then only to present examples of the most astounding partiality, or to submit to the humbling necessity of allowing a body of obstinate burgesses, stubbornly bent on asserting their rights, to carry off the victory. These continual struggles had filled the cities with detestation and contempt for the pope, as well as for the bishops and priests.

But Rome had other adversaries besides the burgomasters and municipal councillors and clerks, and these were to be found both above and below the middle ranks of society. From the commencement of the sixteenth century, the imperial diet displayed the most immovable firmness towards the papal envoys; and in May, 1510, the States, then convened at Augsburg, transmitted to the emperor a list of ten capital grievances which they charged against the pope and the clergy of Rome. The populace at the same time began to wax wroth. Their resent-

null and void, and wished to arrogate to himself the right of inquiry into the elections of the emperors. Louis was even dethroned by a most contemptuous papal bull; paying no regard to which, he employed some learned men in defending his right, greatly to the damage of the pope, and charged pope John XXII. himself with heresy. Though the latter declared the imperial throne vacant, Louis dismissed the pope in his turn, and made himself be crowned in Italy, another pope under the name of Niclos V. being chosen, who, however, did not long maintain himself on the papal seat. The succeeding popes, Benedict XII. and Clement VI., persisted in their pretensions against Louis, and embittered the resentment of the Germans by opposing their emperor in arms, who, however, came off on all sides victorious, and reigned as emperor in the face of papal opposition for three and thirty years. Yet being unexpectedly arrested by death in the midst of his conquests, about the middle of the fourteenth century, papal cunning triumphed in the advancement to the imperial throne of Charles, margrave of Moravia, who even before the death of Louis, had been chosen emperor at the instigation of the popes, and whose crouching servility procured him the nickname of the pope's emperor. It was through him too that, as the author says, the triple crown was placed above that of the Cæsars.—L. R.

ment burst forth in the Rhenish countries in 1512, on which occasion the peasantry, in their indignation at the yoke with which their ecclesiastical sovereigns oppressed them, formed among themselves what was called the alliance of the shoes.¹

Thus, everywhere, alike above and beneath, a hollow noise seemed to reverberate, and to harbinger the thunder storm that was about to burst forth. Germany seemed ripe for the destined task of the sixteenth century. Providence, ever slow in its march, had made all things ready; and even the passions which God condemns, were to be converted by his almighty hand into instruments for accomplishing his purposes.

¹ *Verbond van den Boeren-schoen*, (Anglice, league of the *boor's-shoes*.) Thus we prefer translating, with a little circumlocution, and expressing the thing more accurately, the French *l'alliance des souliers*. To wit: the writer here refers to a league formed at the commencement of the sixteenth century, previous to the rise of the Reformation, among the country people bordering on the Rhine, against the oppressions of the ecclesiastics; and which was a prelude to the great agrarian war that broke out after the rise of the Reformation. This league was called in German the *Bundschuh*, the name given to a large shoe, reaching over the ancles, and bound down the middle with thongs, which was worn by the insurgents in Alsatia at the commencement of hostilities as a military badge; and hence the name was given to the league itself. See CALVISIUS *Chronologia*, p. 908. The purport of this league will be found in Hottinger's *Hist. Eccl.* v. p. 33, 34; its chief articles were as follows: "To throw off all subjection to slavery, and following the example of the Swiss, to assert their freedom by force of arms; to put down all domination, and to slay all who should oppose them; to surprise the town of Bruchsal in the marquisate of Baden; to rob churches and monasteries, and divide the spoil among themselves; never to remain more than four and twenty hours in one place, but to shift about perpetually; to pay no more taxes or tythes to any man, be he prince, noble, or clergyman, and to hold in common, hunting grounds, fisheries, meadows, and woods." The reader may consult on this subject the small work of H. Schreiber, published by Wagner of Freiburg in 1824, and intitled *der Bundesschuh zu Lehn in Breisgau* (1513) *und der arme Konrad von Buhl* (1514), *zwei Vorboten des Deutschen Bauernkrieges*; and the *Urkundenbuch der Stadt Freiburg* of the same writer, with respect to which he states in the preface to vol. ii. second series, vii. viii; "There now lies before the editor no fewer than 683 pieces from the archives of this single place, the copying of which has been done partly by himself, partly under his superintendence. They consist of the correspondences of the towns in the Breisgau and the Black Forest, in Switzerland and in Suabia, with Freiburg, of articles of agreement, memorials and letters from the peasantry and their landlords, accounts of battles, minutes of judicial proceedings, challenges, administrative arrangements, and so forth." Still I have not been so fortunate as myself to see these two publications of Dr Schreiber, and for the above information I am indebted to the kindness of a friend. It will be seen, from the title of the first mentioned work, that the league in question is referred to the year 1513, differing by a year from our author, who places it in 1512. It is remarkable that a like difference is to be found between Calvisius and Hottinger, although between them and the publications just mentioned there is a difference of ten years, Calvisius giving 1502, and Hottinger 1503. The most probable method of reconciling these is to suppose that the confederates renewed their leagues from time to time, and at different places, and that these might have been prolonged from year to year.—L. R.

Let us turn our regards to the other nations.

We find a simple and brave people¹ parcelled out into thirteen petty republics, and placed with their allies in the centre of Europe, amid mountains which might be regarded as their citadel. Who would have expected to find in these obscure valleys, the men whom God was to choose for the purpose of being associated with the children of the Germans, in the deliverance of the Church? Who would have thought that small unknown towns, hardly emerged from barbarism, hid behind inaccessible mountains and at the extremities of lakes whose names are unknown in history, should in the order of Christianity, take precedence of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome? Nevertheless so it was. Such was the will of Him who causes it to rain upon one city, and causes it not to rain upon another city, who desires that one piece of land should be rained upon, and another piece whereupon it has not rained, to be withered.²

Other circumstances, besides these, seemed to encompass with many perils the advance of the Reformation amid the Helvetic tribes. If, under a monarchy, the encroachments of prerogative are to be dreaded, in a democracy there was room to fear that the people might be precipitate. It is true that the same reform, which could advance but slowly and gradually in the states of

¹ The author here refers to the thirteen Swiss cantons, which, after having been subject in former times to the German emperors and the dukes of Austria, being oppressed by those masters, threw off the yoke and entered into a joint league for the defence of their freedom. The original basis of this was laid two centuries before the Reformation, in 1308, between the three cantons of Schwitz, Uri, and Unterwalden, on the Austrian governor, who had conducted himself tyrannically, being slain by the famous William Tell, and after they had together driven out the Austrians by executing the bold plan of Walther Furst of Uri, Werner von Stauffach of Schwitz, and Arnold von Melchthal of Unterwalden. A perpetual league was then entered into by the three cantons in the year 1315, after they had established their independence by the slaughter of a numerous army of Austrians. This league was forthwith extended to other cantons, namely Lucern, Zurich, Zug, Glaris, and Bern, all which joined in it. It was farther extended in the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, by four more cantons being included, namely Freiburg, Solothurn, Basel, and Schaffhausen; and finally increased to thirteen in number, by the accession of Appenzell—all before the breaking out of the Reformation. Over and above these, some other allies have joined them from time to time, such as the Grisons, the Valais, the Abbey of St Gall, the cities of Neuchâtel and Geneva, &c. A simple though little polished people inhabited that country which, in the Lord's counsel, was along with Germany called to be the cradle and nursery of the Reformation.—L. R.

² Amos.

the empire, might be decided upon in a day in the sovereign councils of the Swiss republics; notwithstanding, it was needful to guard against an imprudent haste, which, from want of having patience to wait for the favourable moment, might introduce innovations, otherwise useful, before matters were yet ripe for them, and thus compromise the public peace, the constitution of the state, and the future prosperity of the Reformation.

Yet Switzerland, too, had been in course of preparation. It was a tree, wild but generous, which had been preserved in the bosom of those valleys, in order that there might one day be grafted upon it a fruit-bearing branch of inestimable value. Providence had imbued that people with those principles of courage, independence, and freedom, which, when the hour of their struggle with Rome was to sound, would call forth all their energies. The pope had bestowed on them the title of protectors of the Church's freedom, but this honourable appellation they seem to have understood in quite a different sense from that in which it was bestowed. Though their soldiers kept guard around the pope in the precincts of the ancient capitol, their citizens among the Alps sedulously guarded their religious liberties against invasion from the pope and the clergy. They prohibited ecclesiastics from having recourse to foreign jurisdiction. The "Letter of the priests," (Paffenbrief, 1370,) was an energetic protest in favour of Swiss freedom against the abuses and the power of the clergy. In this courageous opposition to the pretensions of Rome, Zurich was distinguished above all the other states, while Geneva, at the other extremity of Switzerland, wrestled with her bishop for the mastery. Now, although it is not to be doubted that in these cases, the love of political independence made many of the citizens neglect true freedom, yet God desired that that affection should lead others to the embracing of a doctrine which would make the nation free. These two cities acted the most conspicuous part of any, in the struggle which we have undertaken to describe.

But although the Helvetic cities, as they lay more open to amelioration, naturally fell first into the reforming movement, the same was not to be the case with the inhabitants of the mountains. One might have thought that these tribes, being more simple and energetic than even their confederates in the

cities, would have eagerly embraced a doctrine, essentially characterised by simplicity and force; but He who has said "*two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken and the other left,*"¹ left the men of the mountains and took those of the plain. An attentive observer might possibly have discovered some previous symptoms of this difference, which was now to declare itself between the inhabitants of the cities and those of the highlands. The latter had not been reached by the intelligence of the times. Those cantons with which Swiss liberty had originated, while proud of the part they had acted in the great struggle of independence, were not disposed hastily to imitate their younger brethren of the lowlands. There seemed no reason for their changing the faith with which they had put Austria to flight, and which had consecrated with its altars every spot that was marked by their triumphs. Their priests were the only intelligent persons to whom they could apply for advice. Their worship and its festivals, by diversifying the monotony of still life, agreeably broke in upon the silence of their peaceful retreats. In short, they remained inaccessible to religious innovations.

So much for Switzerland. On passing the Alps, we find ourselves in that Italy, which, to the eyes of many, seemed the very Holy Land of Christendom. And from what quarter might Europe have looked for the Church's good, if not from Italy and from Rome? Could it be that the power which led so many various characters, in rapid succession, to the pontifical see, should not some day place there such an one as would prove an instrument of benedictions for the Lord's heritages? And if the pontiffs were to be despaired of, might there not be bishops and councils to reform the Church? No good thing cometh out of Nazareth—but shall there be the same hopelessness with regard to Jerusalem and Rome? Such might be man's thoughts, but God thought very differently. He said: "*Let him that is filthy be filthy still,*"² and gave Italy over to her iniquities. Many were the causes which must have contributed to deprive that unhappy country of the light of the gospel. Her several states, always rivals, and often enemies to each other, when shaken by any public commotion, came into violent collision; so that this land of ancient glory was a prey by turns to intes-

¹ Matt. xxiv.² Rev. xxii.

tine disorders and foreign invasions. ¹ One would have thought it doomed to be subjected to nothing but political intrigues, furious factions, and the strife of arms; and these seemed likely long to banish from its territories both the gospel and peace.

Besides this, the broken and shattered condition of Italy, presenting no unity, seemed little fitted for receiving any common impulse. Supposing that the truth had wanted to pass the Alps, or to land on the smiling Italian shores, it would have found a new barrier to arrest its progress at every frontier. No doubt, the popedom had thoughts at that time of establishing an Italian unity. It could have wished, as Pope Julius said, to expel the barbarians, that is, the foreign princes; and it hovered, like a bird of prey, over the mutilated and quivering members of the body of ancient Italy. Had it attained its object, we may believe that the Reformation would not have been effected quite so easily.

And if the truth was to come from the North, how could the Italians have deigned to receive anything from the barbarous Germans, whom with their superior intelligence, their refined taste, and with social manners in their own eyes so exquisite, they despised? Between them and the Reformation, pride interposed a barrier higher than the Alps; and yet the cultivation of the understanding was a still greater obstacle than presumption of heart. Men who admired the elegance of a well turned sonnet, more than the simple majesty of the scriptures, were no propitious soil for the seed of the Word of God; and of all conditions in which a people can be placed, false civilization is the most repugnant to the gospel.

In fine, be the cause what it might, Rome remained Rome, as regarded Italy. Not only did the temporal power of the popes lead the various Italian parties to court the enjoyment of their alliance and favour, at any price; but, further, the universal domination of Rome presented more than one advantage to the greed and vanity of the other ultramontane states. No sooner could it be proposed that the rest of the world should be eman-

¹ Italy was divided into various independent states, some principalities, some republics; often at war with one another, or shaken by internal divisions; while they had also many a time to suffer from the invasions of German and other foreign forces, in the struggle between the popes and the emperors and other foreign wars.—L. R.

cipated from Rome, than Italy would again become Italy; domestic quarrels would not prevail in favour of the foreign system; and all that was wanted in order to revive those common affections and common interests which had long been dormant, was that the head of the peninsular family should be attacked.

On that side, then, there were few chances for the Reformation; and yet, even beyond the Alps, souls were to be found prepared to receive the light of the gospel. Italy was not at that time altogether disinherited.

Spain possessed what Italy did not, a grave and noble-minded people, whose religious spirit has resisted even the decisive test of the eighteenth century and the revolution, and has been preserved down to our own days. Spain has at all times reckoned men of piety and learning among her clergy, and she lay at a sufficient distance from Rome to enable her easily to throw off its yoke. Hence there were few nations in which the renovation of that primitive Christianity which she possibly may have received from St Paul himself, might have been more reasonably expected. And yet Spain rose not among the nations, but was doomed to fulfil that saying of the divine wisdom: "*The first shall be last.*" Various circumstances prepared this sad result.

From her own isolated position and her remoteness from Germany, Spain could be but slightly affected by the terrible earthquake that so violently agitated the empire. Besides, her attention was engrossed with very different treasures from those which the word of God was then offering to the nations. The eternal world was eclipsed in her regard by the discovery of the new;¹ and all men's imaginations were inflamed by the acquisition of a country, quite new to them, and which seemed to be made up of silver and gold. No room was left in a Spanish

¹ Columbus having been equipped by Ferdinand, king of Spain, for his voyage towards the close of the XVth century discovered America, and this first opened the way for the Spaniards making the conquest of that continent, from which Spain drew an incalculable amount of gold and silver. At the same period, like good fortune apparently fell to the lot of Portugal, in whose interests Vaquez de Gama, by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, opened up a new way to the East Indies and their treasures, as the author briefly mentions. Both these kingdoms were thus at that time so much engrossed with this world's riches, as to be indifferent to the riches of heaven, to which, in other respects, the Reformation pointed out to them a more accessible path. To this we must add, as mentioned in a former note, that the reduction of the Moors some time before, swelled men's hearts with pride, and led to the introduction of the Inquisition, under king Ferdinand, hence called the Catholic.—L. R.

heart for more noble thoughts, for it was pre-occupied by the intense desire of enriching itself. A powerful clergy, with scaffolds and money at their command, lorded it over the peninsula. The Spaniard willingly paid a servile homage to priests, who by relieving him of all spiritual disquietudes, left him free to give himself up to his passions, and to take to money-making, foreign discovery, and the new continents. Victorious over the Moors, Spain, at the cost of her noblest blood, had pulled down the crescent from the walls of Granada and many other cities, and had planted the cross of Jesus Christ in its place. This burning zeal for Christianity, from which so much might have been expected, turned against the truth. Could it be thought that Catholic Spain, after triumphing over the unbelievers, would fail to oppose heresy? Could they who had expelled Mahomet from their lovely territories, allow Luther to find a footing in them? Their kings did even more than this; they armed whole fleets against the Reformation, and in their eagerness to vanquish it, went to attack it in Holland and in England. These attacks, however, served only to aggrandize the nations that were thus assaulted, and their forces eventually overwhelmed Spain. Thus did those Catholic regions, as one of the results of the Reformation, lose that very temporal prosperity which had led them, in the first instance, to reject the spiritual liberty of the gospel. Nevertheless, a generous and brave people dwelt beyond the Pyrenees; and many of their noble children, with a zeal no less ardent, but more enlightened than that of those who had given their blood to the sword of the Arabs, laid down their lives as an offering on the martyr-fires of the Inquisition.

Portugal presents almost the same picture as Spain; Emmanuel, the Fortunate, bestowed on it an age of gold, which must have rendered it ill fitted for the self-denial required by the gospel. The Portuguese, as a nation, threw themselves on the then lately discovered routes to the East Indies and to Brazil, and turned their backs on Europe and the Reformation.

Few countries could be supposed more likely to receive the doctrines of the gospel than France, for almost all the spiritual and intellectual life of the middle ages seems to have been concentrated there. One would have said that the pathways were everywhere beaten smooth for a great manifestation of the truth.

Men of the most opposite characters, and who had exercised the most powerful influence over the French populations, will be found to have had some affinity with the Reformation. Thus St. Bernard had set the example of that cordial faith, and that inward piety, which were the fairest features of that change; and Abelard had introduced into the study of theology that rational principle, which, though incapable of building up what is true, is powerful for the destruction of what is false. Moreover, many alleged heretics had rekindled the flames of the word of God throughout the French provinces. The university of Paris had directly confronted the Church, and was not afraid to combat her. Bold language was employed at the commencement of the fifteenth century by the Clemangis and the Gersons. The pragmatic sanction¹ was a great act of independence, and seemed as if it ought to have been the palladium of the Gallican liberties. The French noblesse, so numerous, so jealous of their pre-eminence, and who at this epoch saw themselves gradually deprived of their privileges, to the enhancement of the royal authority, ought to have been favourably disposed to a religious revolution which might have restored to them somewhat of the independence they had lost; while the people, lively, intelligent, and susceptible of generous emotions, was accessible, as much as, or more than any other, to the truth. One would have thought that in the French territories, the Reformation must have been the birth which was to crown the long labour of several centuries. But the car of France which for so many generations seemed to drive hurriedly in that direction, made a sudden turn, and took quite an opposite course at the period of the Reformation. Such was the will of Him who guides nations and their chiefs. The prince who then occupied the car and held the reins,² being a lover of literature, might of all the

¹ Such is the name which has been given to a mandate of Louis IX. in the thirteenth century, intended for the defence of the prerogatives and franchises of the Gallican Church against the encroachments and demands of the Roman popes; but, still more, to a later mandate of Charles VII. in the fifteenth century, entirely conformed to the decrees of the Church-council of Basel and calculated to limit the power of the popes, both as respected elections to ecclesiastical offices, which were thereby restored to their ancient freedom, and the abolition of the first-fruits of ecclesiastical revenues, and other pecuniary extortions of the popes, together with the recognition of the authority of a general council as above that of the pope.—L. R.

² To wit Francis I., mentioned by name a little farther on; a prince from

chiefs of Catholicity, have been thought the most likely to second the Reformation. But he threw his people into another course, so that the symptoms of several centuries proved deceptive, and the impulse that had been impressed upon France, died away under the ambition and fanaticism of her kings. The Valois family deprived her of what ought to have belonged to her. Perhaps, had she received the gospel, her power might have become exorbitant. God desired to take the feeblest nations, and nations which as yet were not, to make them the depositories of his truth. France, after being all but reformed, in the end went back and became Roman Catholic. The sword of her princes being thrown into the scale, made her incline towards Rome; and, alas! another sword, that of her reformed themselves, secured the loss of the Reformation. Hands used to the sword, became unused to be held up in prayer. Be it remarked that it is by the blood of its confessors, not by that of its adversaries, that the gospel triumphs, and that the blood that is shed by its defenders extinguishes its flames and smothers it. From the very commencement of his reign, Francis I. was in haste to make a sacrifice to the popedom of the pragmatic sanction, and to substitute in its stead a concordat, altogether to the detriment of France and to the advantage of the crown and of the Pope. The sword with which he supported the rights of the German Protestants when at war with his rival, that "father of the sciences" plunged, at the same time, up to the hilt in the hearts of his reformed subjects; and what ambition had made him do, was repeated by his successors from fanaticism, from weakness, or to hush the cry of their guilty consciences. They encountered a strenuous resistance but not always such as that with which the martyrs of the first ages opposed the pagans. Hence the power of the Protestants constituted their weakness; their triumph led them on to their fall.

The Netherlands formed, at that time, one of the most flourishing countries of Europe. The people there were industrious; the numerous connections they maintained with the various parts of the world, gave them more than ordinary intel-

whose love of the sciences much good might have been expected for the Reformation, had not his ambition led him to think that it would prove more for his advantage to oppose it and to range himself with the papal interest.—J. R.

ligence; they were brave and passionately attached to their independence, privileges, and freedom. Placed at the very gates of Germany, they were among the first to hear the noise of the Reformation; they were capable of receiving it, but all did not receive it. The truth was bestowed on the poorest. The hungry were filled with good things, while the rich were sent empty away.¹ After having been always more or less intimately connected with the empire, the Netherlands had now for forty years been one of the possessions of Austria; and, on the demise of Charles V., they fell to the share of the Spanish branch, in the person of the ferocious Philip. The princes and governors of that wretched country crushed the gospel there beneath their feet; there they waded in the blood of martyrs. The provinces were at that time divided between two very distinct parties, one of which, that occupying the southern parts, was gorged with wealth, and surrendered. Was it to be expected that a long and bloody contest about points of faith, could be tolerated by manufacturers of the most exquisite productions, or by merchants who conducted the immense commerce, inland and sea-borne, of Bruges, then the mighty entrepôt of the trade of the north, and of Antwerp, then the very queen among commercial cities? The northern provinces, on the contrary, defended by their towns, by the sea, by their internal waters, and still more by the simplicity of their manners, and their determination to peril all for the gospel, not only saved their franchises, their privileges, and their faith, but won for themselves besides, a glorious independence and nationality.

England hardly seemed to promise then what she has made good since. Driven out of the continent,² where she had long

¹ By the poor, it appears from what follows, that the author means the northern; by the rich, the southern provinces of the united Netherlands.—L. R.

² The event to which the author here refers had its commencement in the former half of the fourteenth century, when on the death of Charles IV., a more remote relation by blood, Philip of Valois, ascended the throne of France, against which Edward, king of England, as son of Isabella of France, and thus a nearer blood relation, though in the female line, entered his protest. This gave occasion for the English to invade France, of which country, during sundry alternations of fortune, they more than once possessed themselves to a great extent, and repeating their invasions under different kings, part of their conquests were retained down to the middle of the fifteenth century, until Charles V. at length compelled them first to retire from Paris, to which they had penetrated anew, and then to evacuate all France with the single exception

been obstinately bent on making the conquest of France, she began to turn her regards to the ocean, as the true object of her conquests, and which was reserved to her, as her heritage. Twice had she been converted to Christianity, once under the ancient Britons,¹ and a second time under the Anglo-Saxons; and at the time of which we speak, she was very devoutly paying Peter's pence.² Yet high destinies awaited her. Mistress of the ocean, and present, at the same moment, at all parts of the globe, she was one day with the people she was to bring forth to become, as it were, the hand of God in sowing the seeds of life in the remotest islands and most extensive continents. Even then, one might have guessed from some circumstances what her destinies were to be; great luminaries had irradiated the British islands, and of these some glimmering still was left. Their towns and harbours were inundated with foreigners; artists, merchants, and mechanics; coming from the Netherlands, Germany, and other parts abroad; so that new religious views could be transported thither with great ease and speed. To conclude, the throne of England was then occupied by a capricious prince, a man of some learning and much courage, who

of Calais. That sea-town they held for above a century afterwards, but without even then attempting to renew their encroachments on France or the continent; choosing rather thenceforward to extend their influence by sea, for which their situation adapted them, and by that way to extend it also, into remote regions.—L. R.

¹ There is no doubt that Christianity penetrated at a very early period into Britain, as England was then called. If we can trust to the authority of Bede, a celebrated English writer of the eighth century, the British king, Lucius, during the reign of the Roman emperor, Marcus Antoninus, in the second century, sent to the Roman bishop, Eleutheros, for instructors in the Christian religion, and having obtained them, embraced the gospel. But thereafter in the fifth century Christianity was again annihilated there by the Anglo-Saxons, a people of German origin, who, being invited by the British king, Vortigern, to assist him against his inland enemies, the Picts and the Scots, possessed themselves of that part of Britain now called England, while themselves were as yet heathens:—yet in the following century, being the sixth, one Augustine, with forty other Benedictine monks, went over to England and introduced Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons, after their king, Ethelbert, had been led into a liking for the Christian religion by his Christian wife, Bertha, daughter of Cherebert, king of Paris. In that same century many of the Picts and Scots who had still retained their heathenism, were converted to Christianity by the labours of the Irish monk, Columbus.—L. R.

² Hence called Peter's pence, consisting of the tax of a penny for every house, first granted in the eighth century to Ina, king of the West Saxons, for the erection and maintenance of an English college at Rome, and afterwards claimed by the popes, confirmed by the laws of different princes, and not entirely abolished until the reign of Henry VIII., about the time of the Reformation.—L. R.

was perpetually changing his opinions and projects, and turned from side to side according as he was swayed by the violence of his passions. Now, it was possible that some of Henry the VIII.'s inconsistencies might prove one day favourable to the Reformation.

Scotland was then agitated by partisanship. A king of five years of age, a queen regent, an ambitious nobility, a clergy possessing much influence, distracted that brave nation by driving it in different directions. Nevertheless, it was one day to appear in the first rank of those that were to receive the Reformation.

The three kingdoms of the North, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, were united under one sceptre. Their rough and warlike inhabitants seemed to have little in common with the doctrine of love and of peace. Still, their very energy made them more disposed perhaps than the people of the South, to receive the power and the teaching of the gospel. Sons of warriors and of pirates, they brought, it would seem, too bellicose a character into the Protestant cause: at a later period they defended it heroically with their swords.

Russia, retired in the extremities of Europe, had at that time few ties with its other states, and, moreover, belonged to the Greek communion. The Reformation effected in the Church of the West had little or no influence on that of the East.

Poland seemed well prepared for being reformed, for the vicinity of the Christians of Bohemia and Moravia had disposed her to receive that impulsion of the gospel which her near neighbourhood to Germany was soon to communicate. So early as in 1500, the nobles of Great Poland had demanded the giving of the cup to the people, in an appeal to the usages of the primitive Church. Christians, persecuted in their own, found a secure retreat in the liberty enjoyed by her cities, and in the independence of her nobility; and many of her inhabitants joyfully received the truth which these refugees brought along with them. Yet no country, in our days, has fewer witnesses to the truth than Poland.

The flame of the Reformation which had long glowed in Bohemia, might now be considered as all but extinguished in blood; and yet some few melancholy survivors had escaped

from carnage, and lived to see the day of which Huss had felt a presentiment.

Hungary was torn by intestine wars, under the government of princes who closed the scene by surrendering the future lot of their people to Austria; that powerful family being placed among the heirs of their crown.

Such was the state of Europe at the beginning of the century which was to effect so mighty a transformation in Christian society.

IX. But we have said that it was on the vast platform of Germany, and in particular in the central city of the empire, Wittenberg, that the grand drama of the Reformation was to open. Let us see, then, who the personages were that appeared in the prologue, ushering in the work of which Luther was to be the hero, or even taking an active part in the first efforts.

Of all the electors of the empire, the most powerful at that time was Frederick of Saxony, surnamed the Wise. He towered above all his equals in other respects, by the influence he enjoyed, by his wealth, his liberality, and his magnificence;¹ and God chose him to serve as a tree beneath whose shelter the seed of the truth might put forth its first germ, without being uprooted by the storms that raged around.

He was born at Torgau, in 1463, and from his youth up showed much love for the sciences, philosophy, and piety. On his coming with his brother, John, to the government of the hereditary estates of his family, which was in 1487, he received the electoral dignity from the emperor, Frederick III. In 1493, he undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and in that venerated place was armed as "a knight of the Holy Sepulchre" by Henry of Schaumburg. In 1502, he founded the university of Wittenberg, which was to be the nursery ground of the Reformation.

When the light appeared, Frederick was found there ready to defend it, although not attaching himself to any side. No one was better fitted to be its guardian; for besides being held in general esteem, he possessed, in particular, the emperor's entire confidence, so much so, as even to take his place when

¹ Qui præ multis pollebat principibus aliis, auctoritate, opibus, potentiâ, liberalitate et magnificentiâ, (Cochlæus, Acta Lutheri, p. 3.)

Maximilian was absent from the empire. His wisdom was not that of the skilled adept in an artful policy, but it was an enlightened and far-seeing prudence, whose first rule it was, never to allow self-interest to infringe the laws of honour and religion.

He felt, at the same time, the power of the word of God in his heart. One day that the vicar-general, Staupitz, happened to be with him, the conversation fell on those who delivered empty declamations to the people. "All discourses," said the elector, "that are filled with nothing but subtilties and human traditions, are wonderfully cold, nerveless, and powerless; for no subtilty can be advanced which another subtilty may not destroy. Simple scripture is invested with so much power and majesty, that, destroying all these learned contrivances for reasoning, it comes home to us and compels us to say: 'Never man spake like this man.'" Staupitz signifying that he was quite of the same opinion, the elector cordially grasped his hand, and said: "Promise me that you will always think thus."¹

Frederick was precisely the prince that was wanted at the beginning of the Reformation. Too much feebleness on the part of its friends might have suffered it to be stifled, while too much precipitation might dangerously have hastened the outburst of that storm which, from its very commencement, had begun to mutter against it. Frederick was at once moderate and resolute. He possessed that Christian virtue which God looks for at all times in those who adore his ways. He waited upon God. He practised the sage advice of Gamaliel, *for if the counsel of this work be of men it will come to nought of itself, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it.*² "Matters," said this prince to one of the most intelligent men of his time, Spengler of Nuremberg, "have come to such a pass, that nothing more can be done in them by man; God alone must be agent. Therefore do we remit these great events, as too difficult for us, into his mighty hands." Providence made an admirable choice in the prince whom it selected for the protection of its own work, at its birth.

Among those who prepared matters for the Reformation, we may reckon Maximilian I., who wore the imperial crown from

¹ Luther, Epp.

² Acts v. according to the French version.

1493 to 1519. He presented an example of enthusiasm in the cause of literature and science, to the other princes of the empire, and to the whole of Germany. Less attached to the popes than any of them, he even for some time entertained the idea of seizing on the popedom for himself; and one may suppose, after this trait, that a power like the Reformation, which rose as a rival to the Pope, would not likely find the emperor of Germany among its most deadly enemies.

Even among the princes of the Roman Church, venerable men might be found who, by sacred studies and a sincere piety, were prepared for acting a part in the divine work which was about to take place in the world. Christopher of Stadion, bishop of Augsbουργ, both knew and loved the truth, but a bold profession of it would have cost him the loss of every thing. Lawrence of Bibra, bishop of Wurzburg, a man of honesty, piety, and wisdom, and who commanded the respect of the emperor and of the princes, freely reprobated the Church's corruptions; but he died in 1519, too early for the Reformation. John VI., bishop of Meissen, used to say: "Every time I read the bible, I find quite a different religion there from what people teach us." John Thurzo, bishop of Breslau, was called by Luther "the best of the bishops of his age."¹ But he died in 1520. Guillaume Brignonet, bishop of Meaux, powerfully contributed to the reformation of France. Who can say to what an amount the enlightened piety of those bishops, and of many others, helped to bring about the great work of the Reformation in their own dioceses, and even beyond these?

Nevertheless, it was reserved for less powerful men to be the chief instruments employed by God's providence, in preparing the Reformation. These were the men of literature and science, called the *humanists*; they were men that exercised the greatest influence on their age.

At that time open war was waged between these disciples of literature and the scholastic theologians. The latter observed with alarm, the movement which was going on in the domain of thought, and denied that the Church's surest safe-guard was to be found in immobility and darkness. In order to save Rome, these now combatted the revival of letters, but instead of that.

¹ Luth. Epp. i. p. 524.

they only contributed to her downfall. Rome was materially interested in this contest. She had momentarily gone out of her course during the pontificate of Leo X.; when, abandoning her old friends, she clasped her new adversaries to her bosom. The popedom and literature then formed a friendship which seemed likely to break up the ancient alliance between monachism and the popedom. But the popes did not perceive that what they had taken up as a plaything, was a sword which might prove fatal to them; just as in the last century, princes were seen to welcome to their courts a political philosophy which, had all its influence been allowed to it, would have overturned their thrones. The alliance was short-lived. Literature advanced, altogether unconcerned about what damage it might do to the power of its patron. The monks and the schoolmen could perceive that to abandon the Pope would be to abandon themselves; and the Pope was not to be prevented by the transient patronage he had given to the fine arts, from taking measures the most opposite to the spirit of the time whenever he should feel so inclined.

Most animating was the spectacle then presented by the revival of letters. Let us sketch some of the picture's outlines, selecting such as are most intimately connected with the revival of the faith.

To secure the triumph of the faith, it was, first of all, requisite that the arms wherewith that triumph was to be achieved, should come forth from the arsenal in which they had been buried for ages. These arms were no other than the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The love and the study of the Greek and Hebrew sacred literature, had to be revived in Christendom, and the man chosen by God's providence for this task was called John Reuchlin.

In the choir of the church of Pforzheim, people had remarked a beautiful boy's voice which caught the attention of the margrave of Baden. It was the voice of John Reuchlin, a poor boy of pleasing manners and sprightly character, the son of an honest burgess of that place. The margrave was not long of loading him with favours, and selected him in 1473 as the person who was to accompany his son, Frederick, to the university of Paris.

Great was the joy of the son of the Pforzheim door-keeper as he arrived with the prince, in that at the time most celebrated school of all the West. There he found the Spartan Hermonymos, John Weissel, surnamed *the light of the world*, and thus he enjoyed the opportunity of being under the ablest teachers while studying Greek and Hebrew, for neither of which was there any professor then in Germany, and which he was one day to restore in the native country of the Reformation. The poor German lad copied out Homer's poems and the orations of Isocrates for other students, and thus found means for continuing his studies and for purchasing books.

But from Weissel's mouth he heard other things besides these, and things that powerfully impressed him: "Popes may be deceived. All human satisfactions involve blasphemy against Christ, who has perfectly reconciled and justified the human race. To God alone belongs the power of granting entire absolution. It is unnecessary for a man to confess his sins to priests. There is no purgatory, unless it be God himself who is a consuming fire, and cleanses from all defilement."

When hardly twenty years old, Reuchlin taught philosophy, Greek, and Latin, at Basel; and what was then thought a prodigy, a German was heard speaking Greek.

The partisans of Rome began to be disquieted at beholding generous minds engaged in burrowing among these ancient treasures. "The Romans," said Reuchlin, "make wry faces, and bitterly complain, pretending that these literary labours are all contrary to Roman piety, in as much as the Greeks are schismatics. Oh what pains, what suffering, must be endured in bringing back Germany at last to wisdom and learning!"

Eberhard of Wurtemberg, soon after, sent for Reuchlin to Tübingen, there to be the ornament of that rising university, and in 1487, that prince took him with him into Italy. Chalkondas, Aurispa, and John Pica of Mirandola, became his companions and friends at Florence; and, at Rome, on a solemn audience being given to Eberhard by the Pope, who was surrounded with his cardinals, Reuchlin delivered a discourse in such pure and elegant latinity, that the persons present, never having looked for any thing of the kind from a barbarous German, were quite amazed; the Pope himself exclaiming: "This man

assuredly deserves a place among the best orators of France and Italy."

Ten years after this, Reuchlin was compelled to shelter himself from the resentment of Eberhard's successor, in the elector Philip's court, at Heidelberg. Philip was at this time endeavouring, with the aid of his friend and chancellor, John of Dalberg, bishop of Worms, to diffuse the illumination now dawning at all points of Germany. Dalberg founded a library, of which all men of learning were allowed the use, and on this new scene Reuchlin vigorously exerted himself in doing away with the barbarism of his countrymen.

An important mission from the elector took him to Rome, in 1498, and there his whole spare time and money were devoted to farther progress in Hebrew under the learned Israelite, Abdias Sphorne, and to the purchase of all the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts he could find likely to increase the daylight which was now dispelling his country's darkness.

An illustrious Greek, Argyropylos, was then engaged in explaining to a numerous audience in that metropolis, the old wonders of his country's literature. To the hall in which this teacher was giving his instructions, our learned ambassador repaired with his retinue, and greeted him, as he entered, with an address in which he deplored the calamities of Greece as she lay gasping under the blows of the Ottomans. The astonished Greek asked the German stranger where he came from, and whether or no he understood Greek? Reuchlin replied: "I am a German, and am not altogether unacquainted with that tongue." He then, at the request of Argyropylos, read and explained a passage in Thucydides which the professor had at the moment open before him. "Alas! alas!" exclaimed the amazed and afflicted Argyropylos, "poor Greece, like a persecuted fugitive, has gone to hide herself beyond the Alps."

Thus did the palaces of Rome witness the meeting of the sons of rough Germany with those of old and learned Greece, the east and the west exchanging greetings in that trysting-place¹ of the world, and the one handing over to the other, those

¹ In thus translating *rendezvous* I merely follow the advice of the great Lord Bacon, who thought his country's language might be bettered by a certain amalgamation with that of Scotland.—TRANSLATOR.

intellectual treasures which she had snatched in haste from the barbarism of the Ottomans. Thus does God, when necessary to the fulfilment of his purposes, bring together in a moment, by some great catastrophe, things which seemed destined to remain for ever apart.

Wurtemberg was open to Reuchlin on his return to Germany, and now it was especially, that he accomplished those tasks which proved so useful to Luther and the Reformation. He translated and explained the penitential psalms, corrected the Vulgate, and, which was his chief merit and glory, was the first in Germany to publish a Hebrew grammar and dictionary. By this work Reuchlin unsealed the long closed books of the Old Testament, and thus, as he himself says, raised for himself a monument more lasting than brass.

But it was by his life as well as by his writings, that Reuchlin sought to promote the reign of truth. Such was his personal influence with the young, that it is impossible to estimate what the Reformation thus owed to him.

We may mention a single instance. There came to live with his sister Elizabeth, for the purpose of studying under him, a young cousin of his, the son of an artizan of the name of Schwarzerd, who was famous for the manufacture of arms. In his delight at witnessing his youthful disciple's genius and application, Reuchlin adopted him, and grudged nothing, whether it were counsels, presents of books, or examples, that might make his relation an useful man to the Church and his country. He rejoiced to see that none of his pains were lost, and deeming the German name *Schwarzerd* somewhat barbarous, according to the custom of that time he translated it into Greek, calling the young student *Melanchthon*. It was the illustrious friend of Luther.

The peaceful Reuchlin, ere long, found himself dragged, in spite of himself, into a violent contest, which proved one of the preludes to the Reformation.

There was then living at Cologne, on intimate terms with the inquisitor Hochstraten, a baptized Jew, called Pfefferkorn. This man and the Dominicans sought and obtained from the emperor Maximilian, possibly with no bad intentions, an order commanding the Jews to bring all their Hebrew books, with the exception of the Bible, to the town-house of their places of residence;

and there these writings were to be burnt. The reason assigned for this, was that they teemed with blasphemies against Jesus Christ. Now it must be confessed that they were at least full of silly things, and that the Jews would not have sustained any great loss by the execution of the order. Still they did not think so, and no one was entitled to deprive them of works much valued at least in their estimation. The Dominicans, too, might well have other reasons besides their zeal for the gospel, and hoped, probably, to extort heavy ransoms from the Jews.

On these works the emperor invited Reuchlin to give his opinion, and the learned doctor expressly pointed out such of them as were written against Christianity. These he delivered over to their doom, but the rest he wished to preserve. "The best method for converting the Israelites," he added, "would be to establish two masters of Hebrew at each university seat, who might teach theologians to read the Hebrew Bible and thus to refute that people's teachers." In consequence of this opinion the Jews had their books restored to them.

Then it was that like hungry carrion crows on seeing their prey escape, the proselyte and the inquisitor were furious in their indignation. Picking out several pages from what Reuchlin had written, and misrepresenting their meaning, they denounced him as a heretic, accused him of secret leanings to Judaism, and threatened him with the chains of the Inquisition. Reuchlin at first allowed himself to become frightened. But these men growing every day more haughty, and prescribing to him shameful conditions, he published, in 1513, a "Defence against the detractors of Cologne," in which he depicts that whole party in the liveliest colours.

The Dominicans swore that they would be revenged of him. Hochstraten called a court at Maintz to condemn Reuchlin. The writings of this learned man were adjudged to the flames. Reuchlin appealed to Leo X., and that Pope, who had no great liking for ignorant and fanatical monks, remitted the whole affair to the bishop of Spire, who declared Reuchlin innocent, and condemned the monks to pay the expenses of the process.

This affair was of great consequence and made much noise in Germany. It exhibited that numerous class, the monkish theologians, in the most odious light. It drew into closer

intimacy all the friends of the learned sciences, who then, after their illustrious chief, were called Reuchlinites. The struggle was a skirmish between advanced posts, which had an influence on the general action soon afterwards fought with error by the heroic courage of Luther.

The union of literature with faith, forms one of the characteristic traits of the Reformation, distinguishing it both from the first establishment of Christianity and from the religious renovation of the present day. Christians who lived in the days of the apostles, were opposed by the mental cultivation of that age; and, with few exceptions, the same is the case with those of our time. The majority of men of letters sided with the Reformers. Public opinion even favoured them. Here the work gained in point of extent, but it may thereby have lost somewhat in point of depth.

Luther, acknowledging all that Reuchlin had done, wrote to him as follows, shortly after his victory over the Dominicans:—"The Lord has wrought in thee, in order that the light of Holy Scripture may again begin to illuminate this Germany where, alas! for so many ages, it has not only been smothered, but completely extinct."¹

Reuchlin was not yet twelve years old when one of the greatest geniuses of his age was born. His early history is curious. A native of Gouda in the Netherlands, called Gerard, a man of much wit and vivacity, loved a physician's daughter called Margaret. He did not live under the influence of Christian principles, or, at least, passion had silenced them. His parents, and nine brothers, would have compelled him to embrace the ecclesiastical profession, but he fled to Rome, leaving the woman he loved about to become a mother. The guilty Margaret brought forth a son. But Gerard knew nothing of this, and some time afterwards word came to him from his parents, that the object of his affection was no more. In an agony of grief he took the vows of a priest, and having consecrated himself entirely to the service of God, returned to Holland, where he found that she was still alive. Margaret would marry no one else, and Gerard remained faithful to his sacerdotal vows. Their

¹ *Maï vita J. Reuchlin.* (Frankf. 1687) *Mayerhoff. J. Reuchlin und seine Zeit* (Berlin, 1830).

affection naturally concentrated itself on their infant son. His mother had reared him with the fondest care. His father, after his return, sent him to school, although but four years old. And he was not thirteen when his master, Sinthemius of Deventer, one day joyfully embracing him, exclaimed, "This child will reach the very highest elevations of learning." It was Erasmus of Rotterdam.

About this time his mother died, and, soon after, sinking beneath the pressure of his grief, his father followed her to the tomb.

Thus was the young Erasmus¹ left alone in the world. His guardians would have had him enter a monastery, but for the monastic life he had a decided aversion. At length a friend persuaded him to enter a house of canons regular, which he could do without taking orders. We find him ere long at the court of the archbishop of Cambray, and, more lately, at the university of Paris. He there pursued his studies in great want but with indefatigable application. No sooner did he acquire a little money than he laid it out, first in buying Greek authors, and then in clothes. Often did the young Hollander apply in vain to the generosity of his protectors; accordingly, at a later period, it was his great delight to support young men who were studious but poor. Applying himself unremittingly to the investigation of truth and the acquisition of learning, he shrank, nevertheless, from the study of theology, alarmed lest he should discover errors and then be denounced as a heretic.

The laborious habits which he then acquired remained with him throughout his whole life; even in the course of his travels which were usually performed on horseback, he lost no time. He composed on the road as he ambled across the country, and wrote down his thoughts on arriving at an inn. It was thus that he produced his famous "Praise of Folly²" as he was travelling from Italy to England.

Erasmus soon earned a high reputation among the learned. But the monks, stung by his *Praise of Folly*, in which he had ridiculed theirs, devoted him to intense hatred. When he was

¹ His proper name was *Gerhard*, as was his father's. This Dutch name he translated into the Latin *Desiderius* and the Greek *Erasmus*.

² *Εγκόμιον ματίας*. Seven editions were taken off in the course of a few months.

sought for by princes, his excuses, when he wanted them for the purpose of avoiding compliance, were exhaustless; for he liked much better to earn his bread as a corrector of books for the printer, Frobenius, than to live surrounded by luxuries and favours at the magnificent courts of Charles V., Henry VIII., and Francis I., or to place on his head the cardinal's hat that was offered to him.¹

From 1509 downwards he taught at Oxford. In 1516 he came to Basel, and established himself there in 1521.

Now, what influence did he exert on the Reformation?

That influence has been over-estimated on the one side, and too much depreciated on the other. Erasmus never was, and never could have been, a Reformer; but what he could not do himself, he facilitated the doing of by others. Not only did he diffuse in his own age, that love of learning, and that spirit of research and inquiry which led others much farther than he went; but, moreover, under the protection of great prelates and of mighty princes, he contrived to expose and attack the vices of the Church by the most pungent satires.

Erasmus did more than this: not content with attacking abuses, he endeavoured to recall the clergy from the study of the schoolmen, to the study of holy scripture. "The highest object," said he, "of the revival of philosophical studies, will be to learn to become acquainted with simple and pure Christianity in the bible." Noble saying! and would that the organs of the philosophy of our days as well understood their calling! "I am firmly resolved," he farther said, "to die in the study of the Scripture: in it I find my joy and my peace."² "The sum of all Christian philosophy," says he in another place, "is comprised in this: To place our whole hope in God who, without our merit, by grace, gives us all in Jesus Christ; to know that we are redeemed by the death of his Son; to die to worldly lusts, and to walk in conformity with his teaching and example, not only without offence to any, but, further, doing good to all; patiently to endure trial in the hope of future recompense; in fine, to take to ourselves no credit for our virtues, but to give

¹ A principibus facile mihi contingeret fortuna, nisi mihi nimium dulcis esset libertas, (Epist. ad Pirck.)

² Ad Servatium.

thanks to God for all our powers and all our doings. Such are the convictions with which man ought to be penetrated, until this has become in him a second nature.”¹

But Erasmus was not satisfied with this frank confession of evangelical doctrine; his labours were more efficient than his words. In particular, he greatly promoted the truth by the publication of his critical edition of the New Testament, which was the first, and for long the only one; it appeared at Basel in 1516, a year before the Reformation began. He accompanied it with a Latin translation in which he boldly corrected the Vulgate, and with justificatory remarks. Erasmus thus did for the New Testament what Reuchlin had done for the Old.

From that time forth, theologians could read the word of God in the original tongues, and proceeded from that to the acknowledgment of the purity of the doctrine of the Reformers. “Would to God,” says Erasmus in publishing his work, “that it may bear as much fruit for Christianity as it has cost me pains and application!” and he had his wish fulfilled. The monks exclaimed in vain: “He wants to correct the Holy Spirit!” The New Testament published by Erasmus, opened a fresh flood of light; and this great man farther diffused a taste for the word of God by his paraphrases on the Epistle to the Romans. The effect of these labours went even beyond his intentions. Reuchlin and Erasmus unsealed the Bible to the learned; Luther restored it to the people.

Erasmus was to many a kind of bridge of passage. Many who would have taken alarm at the truths of the gospel when presented in all their force and purity, allowed themselves to be allured to them by him, and became afterwards the most zealous abettors of the Reformation.

But his very fitness for the task of preparation, unfitted him for that of accomplishment. “Erasmus,” said Luther, “is admirable in pointing out errors, but he knows not how to teach the truth.” Christ’s gospel was not the fire that kindled and kept up his life,—the centre from which his activity threw out its rays. He was first a learned, and next only, a Christian man. He was too much influenced by vanity to exercise a decisive

¹ Ad Joh Slechtam. 1519. *Hæc sunt animis hominum inculcanda, sic, ut velut in naturam transeant.* (Er. *Epp* i p. 6^{to}.)

influence over his age. He anxiously calculated the consequences which each of his proceedings might have in regard to his reputation, and there was nothing he liked so much to speak of as himself and his glory. "The Pope," he wrote to an intimate friend with childish vanity, at the time of his declaring himself the adversary of Luther, "the Pope has sent me a diploma full of kindness and testimonies of honour. His secretary swears to me that such a thing was never before heard of, and that the Pope dictated it to him word for word."

Erasmus and Luther are the representatives of two grand ideas on the subject of reform, and of two great parties in their own age and in all ages. The one is composed of men of a timid prudence; the other comprises the resolute and the bold; both as they existed at that time, were personified in these two illustrious chiefs. Your men of prudence trusted to a reformation being brought about in the Church by little and little, and without schism, by the cultivation of theological literature, but the men of action thought that the diffusion of the soundest ideas among the learned, would not dispel popular superstitions, and that the correction of such or such an abuse was a small matter if the entire life of the Church were not renewed.

"A disadvantageous peace," Erasmus would say, "is to be preferred to the justest war."¹ He thought, and how many Erasmuses have there been since, and are there living now!—he thought that a reformation which was to shake the Church might risk overturning it; he was alarmed at the prospect of men's being excited, of evil mingling with the small amount of good that could be effected, of existing institutions being destroyed without being replaced by others, and the vessel of the Church, with the water rushing into it at all parts, being engulfed at last amid the storm. "They who would introduce the sea into new marshes," said he, "often do what they have cause to repent of; for the formidable element, when once let in, does not flow as they would wish it should, but rushes abroad as it pleases, and causes immense devastation."²

But the courageous among his contemporaries had wherewithal

¹ *Malo hunc, qualisquisque est, rerum humanarum statum quam novos excitari tumultus*, he farther said. (Erasm. Epp. i. p. 953.)

² *Semel admissum non ea fertur, quâ destinârat admissor . . .* (Erasm. Epp. i. p. 953.)

to reply to this. History has given ample proof that a frank exposition of the truth, and open battle with falsehood, could alone make victory certain. Had mild measures been followed, political artifices and the trickery of the papal court, would have extinguished the light as soon as kindled. And had not mild measures been employed for ages? Had not councils upon councils been convened for the purpose of reforming the Church? All had been of no avail, and why pretend anew to repeat an experiment which had so often proved abortive?

No doubt a fundamental reform could not have been effected without schisms. But when did there ever appear anything great or good among men, which did not cause some agitation? This dread of seeing evil mingle with good, may be ever so legitimate, but even then, would it not lay an arrest on what are precisely the noblest and the holiest undertakings? Instead of shrinking from the evil which may arise out of a great agitation, we ought to gather up our energies for the task of combatting and destroying it.

We ought besides, to consider the total difference between a commotion resulting from human passions, and one emanating from the Spirit of God. The one shakes society to its base—the other strengthens and braces it. How erroneous, then, like Erasmus, to suppose that in the state in which Christendom then was, with that medley of conflicting elements, of truth and falsehood, of death and life, there yet remained any possibility of preventing violent convulsions! As well might we attempt to shut up the crater of Vesuvius when the angry elements are boiling in its breast! Already had the middle ages seen several violent commotions under an atmosphere less charged with storms than was that of the times of the Reformation, and what was now to be done was not to suppress and arrest, but to direct and guide.

Had the Reformation failed to break out, who could have answered for the fearful ruin that might have come in its place? A prey to numberless destructive elements, and without any to regenerate and preserve it, society must have been frightfully convulsed and shattered. Assuredly it would have been just a reform according to the notions of Erasmus, and such as many moderate but timid men of our day fondly dream of, that would

have entirely subverted the social system of Christendom. Without either the intelligence or the piety which the Reformation caused to descend, even to the obscurest ranks, the people given over to their violent passions, and to the spirit of restlessness and revolt, would have rushed out like some furious animal, provoked to madness, and incapable of being controlled by any check that could be put upon its wrath. The Reformation was nothing less than an intervention of God's Spirit among men—an arrangement introduced by God himself upon the earth. No doubt, it might cause a fermentation of the elements that lie hid in man's heart; but God overcame these. The doctrines of the gospel, the truth of God, penetrating the mass of the population in various countries, destroyed what it was well should perish, but strengthened what ought to have been retained. The Reformation has had a conservative influence in the world—prejudice only can say that its tendency has been destructive. "The ploughshare," it has been justly said in speaking of the doings of the Reformation, "might as well think that it hurts the earth because it tears it open; whereas it only makes it fruitful."

The grand principle with Erasmus was: "Enlighten, and the darkness will disperse of itself." It was a sound principle, and Luther put it in practice. But when the enemies of the truth, make efforts to extinguish it, or to wrest the torch from the hand that bears it, ought we, from love of peace, tamely to look on? Ought we not to resist the wicked?

Erasmus was wanting in courage; a quality no less requisite in effecting a reformation than in taking a town. Constitutional timidity marked his character. From his early years, the mere mention of death made him tremble. He took infinite pains to preserve his health, and grudged no cost in getting to a distance from a place where a contagious malady prevailed. His very vanity was surpassed by his love of the conveniences of life, and it was this that made him refuse more than one brilliant offer.

No wonder such a man made no pretence to the part of a reformer. "If the corrupt morals of the court of Rome," said he, "call for some great and speedy remedy, this is neither my affair nor that of men like me."¹ He had none of that vigorous

¹ *Ingens aliquod et præsens remedium, certe meum non est.* (Er. Ep. i. . 653.)

faith which animated Luther. And while the latter was ever ready to lay down his life for the truth, Erasmus would ingenuously say: "Let others pretend to martyrdom; as for me, I do not hold myself worthy of that honour.¹ I fear, were there to be any tumult, I might imitate Peter when he fell."

Erasmus, more than any other, had by his discourses and writings prepared the Reformation; then, when he saw the storm he had raised, he gave way to fear. He would have given any thing to have had the previous calm brought back, surcharged as it was with heavy vapours. But it was now too late, for the dyke was already broken, and none could stay the flood which was at once to purify and to fertilize the world. Erasmus was mighty as an instrument in the hand of God; ceasing to be that, he was nothing.

In the end, he knew not for which party to declare himself. None pleased him, and he feared them all. "It is dangerous to speak," said he, "and it is dangerous to hold one's peace." In all great religious movements we may find such undecided characters, persons respectable in some points of view, but who injure the truth, and who while wishing to give offence to none, displease all.

What would become of the truth, did not God raise up more courageous champions for its defence? The following is the advice given by Erasmus to Viglius Zuichem, afterwards president of the higher court at Brussels, on the manner in which he ought to conduct himself towards the sectarians, for such was the name he gave the reformers. "My friendship for you, makes me desire that you would keep aloof from the contagion of the sects, and that you would give them no room to say, 'Zuichem is one of us.' Though you may approve their doctrines, at least dissemble, and above all, dispute not with them. A jurisconsult ought to finesse with these folks, as a dying man once did with the devil. The devil asked him, What is your creed? The dying man, being afraid that were he to say what it was, he might be caught in some heresy, replied: 'What the Church believes.' But the other urged him again: 'What does the Church believe?' The man replied: 'What I believe.' The devil rejoins with the question: 'And what then do you believe?' On which

¹ Ego me non arbitror hoc honore dignus. *IBID.*

the dying man again replies, 'What the Church believes.'¹ Duke George of Saxony, also, a mortal enemy of Luther, having received from Erasmus an equivocal answer to a question he had put to him, said, "Dear Erasmus, wash me my fur cloak, and do not wet it only." Curius Secundus, in one of his works, describes two heavens, the popish and the Christian. He finds Erasmus in neither, but describes him as incessantly moving between the two, in endless gyrations.

Such was Erasmus. He had none of that inward deliverance from bondage which makes a man truly free. How different would he have been, had he but had sufficient self-denial to devote himself unreservedly to the truth! But after having endeavoured to effect some reforms with the approbation of the Church's chief, after having abandoned the Reformation for Rome when he saw that these two things could not advance together, he lost himself in the esteem of all. On the one side, his palinodes could not appease the wrath of the fanatical partizans of the popedom, who feeling how much mischief he had done them, would not forgive him for it. The monks, with impetuous rage, overwhelmed him with insulting language from their pulpits, calling him a second Lucian; a fox that had laid waste the Lord's vineyard. A certain doctor, at Constance, had a portrait of Erasmus hung up in his study, that he might have the satisfaction of indulging the grudge he bore him, by spitting in his face. But on the other hand, Erasmus, having abandoned the cause of the gospel, saw himself deprived of the esteem and affection of the most generous men of his time; and must, no doubt, have forfeited those heavenly consolations which God diffuses in the hearts of such as conduct themselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. At least it would appear that we must infer this from those bitter tears, and painful watchings, that troubled sleep and loathing of food, that distaste for the study of the muses which used to be his only solace, that sorrowful brow, that pallid face, those downcast melancholy looks, that hatred of a life which he calls cruel, and those sighs for death, of which he speaks to his friends.² Poor Erasmus!

¹ Erasm. Epp. 374.

² *Vigiliæ molestæ, somnus irrequietus, cibus insipidus omnis, ipsum quoque musarum studium . . . ipsa frontis maestitia, vultus palor, oculorum subtristis dejectio . . .* (Erasm. Epp. I, p. 1380.)

The enemies of Erasmus, we conceive, went a little beyond the truth, when they exclaimed on the appearance of Luther: "Erasmus laid the egg, and Luther has hatched it."¹

XII. The same symptoms of regeneration which were to be found among the princes, the bishops, and the learned, appeared, also, among men of the world, noblemen, knights, and the military. The nobles of Germany acted an important part in the Reformation. Several of the most illustrious sons of Germany, formed an intimate alliance with the chiefs of literature, and under the impulse of an ardent though sometimes excessive zeal, strove to deliver their people from the yoke of Rome.

Various causes must have concurred to raise up friends to the Reformation from the ranks of the nobility. Some members of that body, while attending the universities, had had their hearts warmed by the flame that glowed in the breasts of the learned; while others, in the course of a generous education of the feelings, had had their souls opened to the excellencies of gospel doctrine, and to many the Reformation bore a kind of chivalrous aspect, which caught their fancies, and enticed them into its train. And it must be confessed, that there were yet others who had no good will to the clergy, regarding them as a body that, under the reign of Maximilian, had powerfully contributed to deprive them of their ancient independence, and to reduce them into subjection to the princes. In the ardour of their enthusiasm, these last thought the Reformation would be found the prelude to a great political renovation; they believed that the empire would come forth from the crisis with quite a new splendour, and that the sword of knights as well as the word of God, was about to establish a better order of things in the world—an order of things radiant with the purest glory.²

¹ The works of Erasmus were published by John Le Clerc, at Liege, in 1703, in ten vols. folio. For his life see Bourigny's *Life of Erasmus*, Paris, 1757. A. Müller, *Leben des Erasmus*, Hamburg, 1828; and his biography inserted by Le Clerc, in his *Bibliothèque choisie*. See also the beautiful and conscientious work of M. Nisard, (*Revue des deux mondes*), who appears to me, however, to have been mistaken in his appreciation of Erasmus and of Luther.

² *Animus ingens et ferox viribus pollens . . . Nam si concilia et conatus Hutteni non defecissent, quasi nervi copiarum, atque potentie, jam mutatio omnium rerum exstitisset et quasi orbis status publici fuisset conversus.* (Camer. *Vita Melanchthonis*.)

Ulrich of Hutten, whose philippics against the popedom procured him the name of the German Demosthenes, formed the connecting link which then united men of the sword with men of letters, for he acquired a brilliant distinction among both. Born of an ancient family in Franconia, he was sent, at the age of eleven, to the monastery at Foulde, and there he was to have become a monk. But as he had no liking for that kind of life, Ulrich fled from the monastery at the age of sixteen, and betook himself to Cologne, where he sedulously studied the languages and poetry. At a later period, he led a wandering life, was at the siege of Padua as a common soldier, saw Rome in all its scandals, and there he pointed those shafts which he afterwards launched against her.

On his return to Germany, Hutten composed an attack upon Rome, under the title of *the Roman Trinity*. He therein unveils all the disorders of its court, and shows the necessity of putting an end to its tyranny by force. A traveller, called *Vadiscus* figures in this tract, and is made to say: "There are three things people generally bring back from Rome: an ill conscience, a spoilt stomach, and an empty purse. There are three things that Rome does not believe: the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, and hell. There are three things that Rome trades in: the grace of Christ, ecclesiastical dignities, and women." This publication compelled Hutten to quit the court of the archbishop of Maintz, where he was residing when he composed it.

When Reuchlin's affair with the Dominicans came out, Hutten actively exerted himself on the side of the learned doctor, and it was then that Crotus Robianus, one of his university friends, and some other Germans, wrote the famous satire intituled, *Letters of obscure men*, a year before the theses of Luther appeared. Hutten had the chief credit of the composition, and probably the greater part was his. Reuchlin's opponents among the monks, are supposed to write the letters, and are represented as entertaining one another on the affairs of the day, and on theological subjects, in their own manner and barbarous Latin. They send their correspondent, Eratius of Cologne, the silliest and most useless questions; giving him the most child-

ishly simple proofs of their gross ignorance, of their unbelief of their superstition, of their low vulgarity, and, at the same time, of their haughty spirit, and fanatical and persecuting zeal. They relate several of their queer adventures, their excesses, their dissoluteness, and divers scandalous passages in the lives of Hochstraten, Pfefferkorn, and other heads of their party. The perusal of these letters is very diverting, from the medley of hypocrisy and absurdity they exhibit, while the whole appears so natural that the Dominicans and Franciscans of England received the work with much approbation, and thought it had been actually composed in the principles of their order and in its defence. A Brabant prior, with credulous simplicity, even gave orders for the purchase of a great many copies, which he sent as presents to the most distinguished of the Dominicans. The monks, waxing more and more angry, now asked the Pope for a severe bull against all who should dare to read these epistles, but to this Leo X. would not consent; so that they had to endure the general laugh, and to devour their resentment as they best could. No work ever gave so terrible a blow to these pillars of the popedom as this, but it was not to sneers and ridicule that the gospel was to owe its triumph; and had such a method been persisted in, had the Reformation betaken itself to the shafts of a sneering worldly spirit, instead of attacking error with the arms of God, its cause would have perished. Luther loudly condemned these satires, and on a friend sending him one intituled *The tenour of Pasquin's Supplication*, he replied:—"The fooleries you have sent me seem to have been written by an unbridled mind. I imparted them to a meeting of my friends, and we all judged alike."¹ Referring to the same work, he writes to another correspondent as follows: "This supplication appears to me to be from the same pen as the letters of some obscure men. I like the author's wishes, but I do not like his work, for he indulges in insults and outrages."² This is a severe judgment, but it shows what mind Luther was of, and how much he rose above his contemporaries; although, it must be added, that he did not himself always follow such sage maxims.

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 37.

² Ibid. p. 88.

Compelled to renounce the protection of the archbishop of Maintz, Ulrich sought that of Charles V., who was then on ill terms with the Pope, and proceeded to Brussels where the emperor then held his court. There, however, far from obtaining what he wanted, he learned that the Pope had required the emperor to send him bound hand and foot to Rome. Hochstraten the inquisitor, Reuchlin's persecutor, was one of the persons who received a commission at Rome to prosecute him. Indignant at men having dared to present such a request to the emperor, Ulrich quitted Brabant. While leaving Brussels, he met Hochstraten on the highway. The terrified inquisitor falls on his knees and commends his soul to God and the saints. No! says the knight, I soil not my sabre with thy blood. He then gave him a few blows with the flat of his sword, and let him depart in peace.

Hutten found shelter in the castle of Ebernburg, where Francis of Sickingen offered protection to all who were persecuted by the Ultramontanes. There it was that his burning zeal for his country's deliverance, dictated those remarkable letters which he addressed to Charles V., to the elector Frederick of Saxony, to archbishop Albert of Maintz, to the princes and the nobility, and which have placed him in the first rank of writers. There it was that he composed those works which were destined to be read and comprehended by the common people, and which diffused through the whole German territory, horror for Rome, combined with love of liberty. In his devotion to the cause of the Reformation, he purposed inducing the nobility to take up arms in favour of the Gospel, and to fall, sword in hand, upon that Rome which Luther was fain to destroy only by the Word, and by the invincible force of truth.

Notwithstanding all this warlike excitement, one loves to find that Hutten was susceptible of feelings of tenderness and delicacy. On the death of his parents, he ceded all the family property to his brothers, although he was the eldest son, and he begged of them neither to write to him, nor to send him money, lest, in spite of their innocence, they might have to suffer from his enemies, and fall with him into the ditch.

If the truth cannot own Hutten as a child, for with her a holy

life, and a charitable heart, are indispensable, she will at least allow him an honourable mention as one of the most formidable foes of error.¹

No less may be said of his illustrious friend and protector, Francis of Sickingen; that noble knight who by many of his contemporaries was thought worthy to wear the imperial crown, and who, as a warrior, shines in the foremost rank of those who became the antagonists of Rome. Much as he delighted in the din of arms, he ardently admired the learned sciences, and venerated those who possessed them. While commanding an army that threatened the province of Wurtemberg, he gave orders that in the event of Stuttgart being taken by assault, the house and property of the great scholar, John Reuchlin, should be spared. He then sent for him to come into his camp, threw his arms around him, and offered to assist him in his quarrel with the monks of Cologne. Knighthood had long gloried in its contempt for literature, but the epoch whose history we are tracing presents us with a spectacle entirely new, and beneath the ponderous cuirasses of such men as Sickingen and Hutten, we may observe that movement of the human intellect which was now everywhere to be felt. The first fruits presented by the Reformation to the world, were men of war enamoured of the arts of peace.

On his retiring from Brussels as a refugee to the castle of Ebernburg, Hutten invited the brave knight to study the doctrines of the Gospel, and explained to him its fundamental principles. "And does any man," cried the astonished Sickingen, "dare venture to overturn such an edifice! . . . Who could do so!" . . .

Many who were afterwards famous as reformers, found shelter in his castle; among others, Martin Bucer, Aquila, Schwebel, and Œcolampadius, so that it was not without reason that Hutten used to call it "the hostelry of the righteous." Œcolampadius had to preach at the castle every day. The warriors however, who had assembled there, began to be tired of hearing so much said about the gentle virtues of Christianity; short as he tried to make them, they always thought his sermons too

¹ Hutten's works were published at Berlin, by Munchen, 1822—25, in five volumes 8vo.

long, and though, to be sure, they seldom missed their daily attendance at church, it was hardly to do more than hear the blessing pronounced and repeat a short prayer, so that Œcolampadius exclaimed: "Alas! the word is sown here on stony ground."

Ere long, Sickingen, wishing to promote the cause of truth in his own way, declared war against the archbishop of Treves, "for the purpose," he said, "of opening a door for the gospel." In vain did Luther, who was now upon the scene, labour to dissuade him; he attacked Treves with five thousand horse and a thousand foot, was compelled to retire by the valiant archbishop, aided by the elector palatine, and the landgrave of Hesse, and in the following spring, was attacked by the allied princes in his castle of Landstein. After a bloody assault, Sickingen was forced to surrender, having received a mortal wound. The three princes entered the fortress, traversed the interior, and found at length the indomitable knight in an apartment underground, stretched on his dying bed. He held out his hand to the elector palatine, without seeming to notice the princes that accompanied him; but these overwhelmed him with questions and reproaches: "Leave me alone," says he, "for I must now prepare to answer to a greater lord than you! . . ." On hearing of his death, Luther exclaimed: "The Lord is righteous but wonderful! It is not with the sword that he would have his gospel promulgated."

Such was the melancholy end of a warrior, who, had he been emperor, or elector, might perhaps have raised Germany to a high pitch of glory, but in the narrow sphere to which he was confined, uselessly expended the powerful talents with which he had been endued. It was not in the stirring spirits of such warriors that divine truth had come down from heaven to fix her abode; it was not by arms like theirs that she was to conquer, and in annihilating the insensate projects of Sickingen, God exhibited anew the truth of what St Paul says:—*The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.*

More wisdom and knowledge of the truth seems to have been possessed by Harmut of Cronberg, the friend of Hutten and of Sickingen. He sent a very modest letter to Leo. X., inviting him to restore his temporal power to its proper owner, the

emperor; and his language to his subjects was that of a father, endeavouring to make them understand the gospel, and exhorting them to faith, to obedience, and to trust in Jesus Christ, "who," he added, "is sovereign lord of us all." He resigned into the emperor's hands a pension of two hundred ducats, "not being willing," said he, "to serve one who gave heed to the enemies of the truth." We find somewhere in his writings the following words, which seem to place him much above Hutten and Sickingen: "Our heavenly teacher, the Holy Ghost, can in one hour, when he pleases, teach us more of the faith that is in Christ, than a man could learn during ten years at the university of Paris."

They who look for the friends of the Reformation only on the steps of thrones,¹ or in cathedrals and academies, and who pretend that none are to be found among the people, are grievously mistaken. The same God who prepared the hearts of so many of the wise and the mighty, prepared, also, many humble and simple persons in the retreats of the people, who were one day to serve as the ministers of his word. The history of the time shows us what a ferment there then was among the lower classes. Not only are young men to be seen passing from these ranks, and at last filling the first places in the Church, but we see men, too, who remained all their lives devoted to the most humble occupations, powerfully contributing to the awakening of Christendom. We shall now give a few traits in the life of one of these.

On the 5th of November 1494, a tailor of Nuremberg, called Hans Sachs, had a son born to him. This son, called after his father, Hans (John) after giving some time to studies which a severe illness compelled him to relinquish, applied himself to the trade of shoemaker, and took advantage of the scope for thought, which his humble calling allowed him, to soar into that higher sphere in which his soul sought its happiness. The reader must know, that ever since songs had ceased to be chanted in the halls of chivalry, they appear to have sought, and found, an asylum among the burgesses of the joyous cities of Germany. A singing school used to meet in the church of Nuremberg; and

¹ See Châteaubriand's *Etudes Historiques*.

the practice of music there, in which this young man took part, opened his heart to religious impressions, and helped to give him a taste for music and poetry. The genius of Hans, however, could not remain shut up within the narrow walls of his workshop. He wanted to see for himself that world of which he had read so many things, which his fellows had told him so much about, and which his imagination had peopled with wonders. Accordingly, in 1511, he bundled up what things he might need, and set off, directing his steps towards the south. The young tourist was not long of meeting on the road with jovial companions, in the persons of students crossing the country, and with many dangerous attractions, and it was then that he felt the commencement of a fearful struggle within him. The desires of this life, and his holy resolutions, became directly confronted, and in his alarm at what might be the issue, he fled and hid himself in the small town of Wels, in Austria (1513), where he lived retired and devoted himself to the fine arts. While he was thus employed, the emperor Maximilian happened to pass through the town, attended by a brilliant retinue. The youthful poet allowed himself to be allured by the splendour of such a court; the prince admitted him into his hunting establishment, and Hans forgot himself anew under the noisy vaults of the palace of Inspruck. But again his conscience loudly remonstrated, and the young huntsman immediately threw off his gay hunting dress, quitted the palace, reached Schwatz, and then came to Munich. It was there, in 1514, that at the age of twenty, he sung his first hymn, "to the honour of God," to a remarkable tune. He was loaded with applause. Every where in the course of his travels, he had found occasion to remark the many melancholy proofs of the abuses beneath which religion was well nigh smothered.

On his return to Nuremberg, Hans set up in business, married, and became the head of a family. When the Reformation broke out, he gave heed to it, and the holy scripture which he had cherished as a poet, he now took up, not to look for poetical images and subjects for his songs, but that he might find the light of truth. To that truth he soon consecrated his lyre; and from a lowly workshop, placed at one of the gates of the

imperial city of Nuremberg, went forth those accents which were to resound throughout the whole of Germany, prepare men's minds for a new era, and everywhere endear to the people the grand revolution which was then in course of being accomplished. The spiritual songs of Hans Sachs, and his versified Bible, powerfully promoted this work, and, indeed, it is not easy to say, which did most for it—the prince elector of Saxony or the Nuremberg shoemaker.

It appears, then, that there was something in all classes that gave warning of the Reformation. On every side signs might be observed, and events were pressing onward, which threatened to subvert what had been the work of ages of darkness, and to usher in among mankind “a new time.” The light which the age had discovered, shed a shower of new ideas over all countries with inconceivable rapidity. Men's minds, after a slumber of so many centuries, seemed as if they would redeem, by extraordinary activity, the time they had lost. And it would have argued ignorance of human nature, to leave them without occupation or nourishment, or to offer them no better aliment, than that which had long sustained their drooping vitality. Already could the human mind clearly discern between what was, and what should be, and measured, with resolute gaze, the vast abyss that lay between these two worlds. Great princes filled the thrones of Europe; the antique colossus of Rome, tottered beneath its own weight; the ancient spirit of chivalry had forsaken the earth, and had given place to a new spirit, which breathed at once on the sanctuaries of learning, and on the dwellings of men of no renown. The art of printing had given wings to speech, which bore it, as the wind bears certain seeds, to the most remote places. The discovery of the two Indies had enlarged the world. . . . All announced a great revolution.

But from what quarter are we to look for the blow which is to scatter the ancient edifice to pieces, and bring a new structure forth from its ruins? None then knew. Who more wise than Frederick? who had more learning than Reuchlin? who more talent than Erasmus? who more mind, and warmth of fancy than Hutten? who more courageous than Sickingen; or more virtuous than Cronberg? And yet it was neither Frederick,

nor Reuchlin, nor Erasmus, nor Sickingen, nor Hutten, nor Cronberg. . . . Men of learning, princes, warriors, the Church itself, "all had sapped some of the foundations, but there they had stopped; and no where was there to be seen the mighty hand which was to become the hand of God."

Meanwhile all felt that it was soon to appear. Some pretended that they could find certain prognostics of it in the stars. One party, contemplating the wretched state of religion, announced the near approach of antichrist, while others presaged an impending reformation. The world was in expectation, and Luther appeared.

BOOK SECOND.

EARLY LIFE, CONVERSION, AND FIRST LABOURS OF LUTHER.

I. ALL was now ready. God who exhausts ages in preparation for what He does, accomplishes his purposes when the hour has come, by the feeblest instruments. To effect great ends by small means, may be regarded as the rule with God; and that rule, which we everywhere behold in nature, is to be found in history also. He took the reformers from where He had taken the apostles; choosing them from that poor class which without being the lowest, hardly ranks with the burgess class. All was to manifest to the world that the work was not of man but of God. The reformer Zwinglius came from the hut of a shepherd of the Alps; Melanchthon, the theologian of the Reformation, from an armourer's workshop; and Luther from the cottage of a poor miner.

The first epoch of a man's life, the period during which his character is formed and his capacity developed, under the hand of God, is always important. This was especially the case in the career of Luther. In fact, we find the whole Reformation already transacted there; for the several phases which that work assumed, one after the other, successively appeared in the soul of the man who was to be the instrument of its accomplishment, ere yet it had taken place in the world. The only key to the reformation of the Church is supplied by our knowledge of the reformation wrought first in Luther's own heart. It is only by studying this work in the individual, that we can come to understand it in its general operations; and they who neglect the one, can know the other only in forms and externals.

They may have a knowledge of certain events and results, but they will fail in making themselves acquainted with the intrinsic nature of that renovation, in as much as the living principle, which was its very soul, will remain hid from them. Let us, then, study the Reformation in Luther, before studying it in the facts that altered the face of Christendom.

John Luther, son of a peasant of the village of Mora, near Isenac, in the county of Mansfeld, in Thuringia, descended from an old and wide spread family¹ of simple burgesses, married Margaret Lindemann, daughter of an inhabitant of Neustadt, in the bishopric of Wurzburg. John and his spouse left the fields of Isenac, and came to settle in the small town of Eisleben in Saxony.²

Seckendorff relates, on the testimony of Rebhan, superintendent at Isenac, in 1601, that Luther's mother, not expecting to be confined for a considerable time, went to Eisleben fair, and was there unexpectedly brought to bed of a son. Much as Seckendorff deserves our confidence, this story does not seem to be exactly true; in fact, none of Luther's older biographers make any mention of it; moreover, the distance between Mora and Eisleben is about eighty leagues, and in the condition in which his mother then was, one does not so readily decide on such a journey, *to be present at a fair*; in fine, the testimony of Luther himself, seems quite opposed to this assertion.³

John Luther was a plain honest man, a keen workman, open hearted, and firm even to obstinacy. Having had more mental cultivation than most men of his class, he was a great reader. Books were then rare, but John let slip no opportunity of acquir-

¹ Vetus familia est et late propagata mediocrium hominum. (Melancht. Vita Lutheri.)

² Ego natus sum in Eisleben, baptisatusque apud Sanctum Petrum ibidem. Parentes mei de prope Isenaco illuc migrarunt. (L. Epp. i. p. 390.)

³ (23) With respect to this testimony by Luther, it does not appear to me to be directly opposed to the account given by Seckendorff on the authority of the superintendent of Eisenach; but that the two may easily be reconciled when we view the matter thus, that while Luther was accidentally born at Eisleben in consequence of his mother's journey to that place, it being evident enough that she was mistaken in her reckoning, still the emigration of his parents thither as a family, first took place afterwards, and perhaps was owing to what had happened. Luther's very words, viewed aright, quite agree with this. He does not say, as he might afterwards have said, after mentioning his birth at Eisleben, "illic migrarant, had emigrated thither," in the pluperfect tense; but in the perfect tense: "migrarunt, emigrated;" that is, as the immediate connection indicates, "after my birth and baptism there."—L. R.

ing them. They supplied the means of recreation during such intervals of repose as were afforded by a life of hard and assiduous toil. Margaret possessed the virtues that adorn upright and godly women; was noted for her modesty, her fear of God, and her prayerful spirit; and was regarded by the matrons of that neighbourhood, as a model of good qualities.¹

It is not precisely known how long the spouses had been settled at Eisleben, when, on the 10th of November, at eleven at night, Margaret gave birth to a son. Melancthon often inquired of the mother of his friend in what year the latter was born; "I very well remember the day and the hour," she would reply, "as for the year, I cannot certainly say." But James, Luther's brother, an honest and upright man, stated that in the opinion of the whole family, Martin was born in the year of Christ 1483, on the 10th. of November, being St. Martin's eve.² The first thought of his pious parents, was to consecrate to God by holy baptism, the infant He had bestowed upon them. The very day following, which happened to be a Tuesday, the grateful and happy father took his son to St. Peter's Church; and there he received the seal of consecration to the Lord. He was called Martin, as a memorial of the day.

When little Martin was not yet six months old, his parents left Eisleben to go to Mansfeld, which is only five leagues distant. The Mansfeld mines were then very famous, and John Luther, a laborious man, thinking that he might possibly have a large family to support, hoped to earn bread for himself and children more easily there. It was in that town that the youthful Luther's mental and bodily capacities were first developed; there his activity first displayed itself, and his words and actions bespoke his future character. The plains of Mansfeld and the banks of the Wipper, formed the theatre of his first frolics with the children of the neighbourhood.

Honest John and his wife had difficulties to struggle with on their first settlement at Mansfeld, and lived for a time in great poverty. "My parents," says the Reformer, "were very poor. My father was a poor woodman, and my mother often carried

¹ *Intuebanturque in eam cæteræ honestæ mulieres ut in exemplar virtutum* (Melanct. Vita Lutheri.)

² *Ibid.*

his faggots on her back, in order to procure the means of bringing up us their children. For our sakes they undertook tasks so rude as even to draw blood." The example of parents whom he thus respected, and the habits he acquired from them, soon inured Luther to toil and frugality. How often may we not fancy him accompanying his mother into the forest, there to gather up his tiny bundle of sticks!

Blessings have been promised to the labours of the righteous, and these John Luther lived to experience. Having amassed a little property, he set up two blast furnaces at Mansfeld. It was beside these furnaces that young Martin grew up to boyhood, and from the produce of such toil, his father, at a later period, provided for his son's studies. "It was from a family of miners," says the good Mathesius, "that the spiritual thunderbolts of Christendom were to come. And this was a figure of what God desired to do in making him the means of cleansing the sons of Levi, and purifying them in his furnaces, like gold."¹ Universally respected for his plain honesty, his unblemished life, and his good sense, John Luther was made a counsellor of Mansfeld, the chief city of the county of that name. Excessive wretchedness might have weighed too heavily on the mind of the child; whereas the easy circumstances of his father's household opened his heart and elevated his character.

John availed himself of his new position in cultivating the society that he preferred, making much of educated men, and often inviting to his table the clergymen and schoolmasters of the neighbourhood. His house presented a spectacle of those social meetings of simple burgesses, which reflected so much honour on Germany at the commencement of the sixteenth century. It was a mirror on which were cast the numerous images successively presented by the agitated scenes of that period. The child was the better for this. We cannot doubt that the very sight of those men to whom he saw so much attention paid in his father's house, must have sometimes made young Martin ambitious of being himself one day a schoolmaster, or a man of learning.

As soon as he was of an age to be capable of instruction, his

¹ Drumb musste dieser geistliche Scmelzer . . . (Mathesius, Historien. 1565, p. 3.)

parents endeavoured to bring him up in the knowledge and the fear of God, and in the practice of the Christian virtues.¹ They diligently attended to this first domestic education, but their affectionate solicitude went farther than this. His father wanted to see him acquire the elements of all that knowledge which he held in such esteem himself, and after commending him to the divine blessing, sent him to school. Martin was still very young. His father, or else a youth of Mansfeld, called Nicolas Emler, used to take him in their arms to the house of George Emilius and come back for him afterwards. Emler subsequently married one of Luther's sisters. Fifty years after, the Reformer reminded old Nicolas of this touching mark of kindness, received from him in early childhood, and noted it down on the fly-leaf of a book given as a present to his old friend.²

The piety, industry, and austere virtue of his parents, had a happy influence on their boy's character, and produced in him an attentive and serious turn of mind. There then prevailed in education a system which sought to operate chiefly by punishments and fear; but Margaret, although she sometimes approved of her husband's excessive severity, would often open her motherly arms and soothe little Martin when in tears. Nevertheless she, too, went beyond the rules of that wisdom which says: *Whoso loveth his son chasteneth him betimes*. The impetuosity of the child's character led to many corrections and reprimands. "My parents," said Luther afterwards, "treated me harshly, and this made me very timid. One day my mother chastised me so severely about a nut as to draw blood. They most sincerely thought it was for my good, but they were no discerners of spirits, which, however, it is necessary to be, if we would know when, upon whom, and how, punishments should be inflicted."³

The poor child had no less harsh treatment to endure at school. His master flogged him one morning fifteen times running; a fact in relating which, Luther says, "we must whip children, but at the same time we must love them." Such an education

¹ Ad agnitionem et timorem Dei . . . domesticâ institutione diligenter adsuefecerunt. (Melancht. Vita Lutheri.)

² Walther's Nachrichten.

³ Sed non poterant discernere ingenia, secundum quæ essent temperandæ correctiones. (Luth. Opp. W. xxii, p. 1785.)

taught Luther betimes to despise the charms of a life of sensuality. "Small beginnings ought to mark the commencement of what is destined to be great," is the just observation of one of his earliest biographers, "and if children are brought up with too much delicacy and regard to their humours, they will be the worse for it all their life after."¹

Martin learned something at least while at school. He was taught the chapters of the catechism, the ten commandments, the apostles' creed, the Lord's prayer, some hymns and forms of prayer, the *donat*, a Latin grammar composed by Donatus, St. Jerome's master, in the fourth century, and which after being perfected by a French monk, called Remigius, in the eleventh century, was long in great repute at all the schools; he studied, also, the *Cisio-Janus*, a most singular calender, composed in the eleventh century; in fine, he was taught all that was known at the Latin school at Mansfeld.

It does not appear, however, that the child was there led to God; for the only religious feeling that could be discovered in him was that of fear. He grew pale with fright at the very mention of Jesus Christ, who had never been represented to him but as an angry Judge. This slavish fear, so far removed from true religion, prepared him, perhaps, for the good news of the gospel, and for the joy he afterwards felt on his coming to know Him who was meek and lowly.

John Luther wished to make his son a scholar. The new light which was now dawning everywhere, penetrated even to the house of the Mansfeld miner; it excited ambitious imaginings there; and John had sanguine hopes of a son whose dispositions were so remarkable, and his application so persevering. Accordingly, when, in 1497, Martin had reached the age of fourteen, his father made up his mind that they should be separated, by his being sent to a school taught by the Franciscans at Magdeburg. Margaret's reluctance was overcome, and Martin put himself in readiness to leave his father's home.

Among the youths whom he met at Mansfeld, was the son of an honest burgess, John Reinecke. Martin and John, after being schoolfellows in their childhood, formed an intimacy which lasted as long as they lived. The two boys set off together for

¹ Was gross soll werden, muss klein augehen. (Mathesius, Hist. p. 3.)

Magdeburg; and there, at a distance from their families, their mutual attachment naturally increased.

Magdeburg was quite a new world to Martin. Amid many privations, for he hardly had enough to support life, he inquired and he listened. Andrew Proles, provincial of the order of Augustinians, was then preaching with much warmth on the necessity of reforming church and state; and it is possible that these discourses may have deposited in the young man's heart the first germ of those ideas which, at a later period, were fully brought out.

This was the period of a rough apprenticeship to Luther. Thrown on the world at fourteen, without friends or protectors, he trembled in the presence of his masters; and his hours of recreation were spent with boys, poor as himself, in painful endeavours to procure wherewithal to live. "I used to beg," says he, "with my schoolfellows for what little food was required for the supply of our needs. One day at the season when the Church celebrates the festival of the birth of Jesus Christ, we went in a body through the neighbouring villages, passing from house to house, and singing, in four voices, the common hymns on the birth of the babe Jesus, born at Bethlehem. We stop't at a peasant's dwelling that stood apart at the end of a village. On hearing our Christmas hymns, the man came out with something for us to eat, and asked with a gruff voice, and in a rough manner: 'Where do you come from, boys?' We were so frightened that we ran off as fast as our legs could carry us. We had no real ground of alarm, for the peasant sincerely meant to give us this assistance; but our hearts, no doubt, had been rendered timid by the threats and the tyranny with which masters at that time overwhelmed their scholars, so that we had been seized with a sudden panic. At length, however, as the peasant continued calling to us, we stop't, threw off our fears, ran towards him, and received at his hand the food he designed for us." "Thus it is," adds Luther, "that we are accustomed to tremble and to fly when our conscience is guilty and alarmed. Then are we afraid even of the help that is offered to us, and of those who are our friends, and who want to do us all manner of good."¹

¹ Lutheri opera (Walch) ii. 2317.

Scarcely had a twelvemonth elapsed, when hearing with what difficulty their son procured a living at Magdeburg, John and Margaret sent him to Isenac, where there was a celebrated school, and where they had a good many relations. The truth is, they had other children to support, and albeit their means had increased, they could not yet afford to maintain their son in a strange place. John Luther's furnaces and laborious industry barely enabled the family at Mansfeld to live; and he had hopes that on Martin's arriving at Isenac, he should find it easier to procure the means of subsistence. But he was no better off there, for such of the people of the place as were related to him either did not trouble themselves about him, or perhaps were too poor themselves to be able to give him any assistance.¹

Here, as when at Magdeburg, the scholar, when pressed by hunger, was compelled to join his schoolfellows, and to sing with them in front of the houses, for the sake of a morsel of bread. This practice of Luther's times is kept up to this day in several towns of Germany, and the voices of the youths sometimes produce a delightful concert. Often did the poor and shy Martin get nothing but hard words instead of bread; and then it was, that in the depth of his distress, he would shed bitter tears in secret, and tremble to think of the future.

One day among others, he happened to have met a repulse from three houses, and thought of going back fasting to his night quarters, when on his way through St. George's place, he made a halt and stood, motionless and melancholy, before the house of an honest burgess. Is it possible that for want of bread, he must give up his studies and return to work with his father, in the mines of Mansfeld. . . . All at once a door opened, a woman appeared on the threshold, and this was the wife of Conrad Cotta, the daughter of the burgomaster of Ilfeld.² Her name was Ursula, and the chronicles of Isenac have called her the pious Shunammite, in remembrance of the woman who so eagerly pressed the prophet Elisha to stay and eat bread with her. This Christian Shunammite had more than once observed young Martin in the assemblies of the faithful, and had been struck by the soft tones of his voice, and by his

¹ Isenacum enim pene totam parentelam meam habet. (L. Epp. p. 390.)

² Lingk's Reisegesch. Luth.

devotion.¹ She had overheard the harsh words that had been addressed to the poor scholar, and seeing him standing at her door, wrapt in sad reflections, she had come to help him, beckoned him to enter, and put before him wherewithal to satisfy his hunger.

Conrad approved of this kindness shown by his wife, and was so taken with young Luther's society that, some days after, he made him an inmate of his house. From that moment there was no cause to fear for his studies; all necessity for his returning to the mines of Mansfeld, and burying the talent which God had given him, was removed. When he knew not what was to become of him, God opened to him the heart and the door of a Christian family, and such was the trust in God with which this event inspired his soul, that it was not to be shaken by the wildest storms of his future life.

Very different from what he had hitherto known, was the life which Luther now led in the family of Cotta. Enjoying a calm existence, with neither cares nor wants to trouble him, his mind became more serene, his character more sprightly, and his heart more open. His whole being seemed to awake to the gentle beams of affection, and began to beat with life, and joy, and happiness. He became more ardent in prayer, his thirst for knowledge increased, and he made rapid progress.

To literature and the sciences he added the charm of the arts; for these, too, were then rising into importance in Germany. Men when designed by God to influence their contemporaries, are first seized and drawn along by the peculiar tendencies of their age. Luther learnt to play on the flute and on the lute; on the latter instrument he would often play an accompaniment to his fine deep voice; and thus would he cheer his heart in its moments of sadness. It gave him pleasure, too, by this harmony, to express his lively gratitude to the mother who had adopted him, and who was fond of music. He himself loved the art even to old age, and composed both the tune and words of some of the most beautiful hymns that Germany possesses. Several of these have even been adopted in France.²

¹ Die weil sie umb seines Singen und herzlichchen Gebets willen
(Mathesius, p. 3.)

² And in Great Britain.—TR.

This was a happy time for the young man, and Luther ever recurred to it with deep emotion. A son of Conrad having come to study at Wittemberg many years afterwards, and when the poor scholar of Isenac had become the doctor of his age, he rejoiced to receive him at his table and under his roof. He would fain so far recompense the son for what he owed to the father and mother; and it was in the recollection of this Christian woman who gave him bread when every body else repulsed him, that he uttered these beautiful words: "Earth has nothing more tender than a woman's heart when it is the abode of piety."

Luther never was ashamed of those days when, under the pressure of hunger, he would mournfully beg for the bread that was required, in order that he might at once study and live; far from this, he recalled the sore necessities of his younger days with thankfulness, regarding them as among the means employed by God for making him what he afterwards became, and for which he would express his gratitude. His heart felt for poor boys obliged to follow the same mode of life. "Despise not," he would say, "boys who by singing before people's doors, seek *panem propter Deum*, bread for the love of God; I, too, have done the same. It is true that at a later time, my father supported me very lovingly and bountifully at the university of Erfurt, and that with the sweat of his brow; nevertheless, I was once a poor applicant for alms. And now, with the help of my pen, I would not exchange fortunes with the grand Turk. Still more, were all this world's wealth to be piled up in a heap, I would not take it in exchange for what I possess. And yet I never should have reached the place I now occupy, had I never been at school and never been taught to write." Thus does the great man find the origin of his glory, in these first humble beginnings. He does not scruple to recall the fact, that that voice of his which startled the empire and the world, used at one time to sue for a bit of bread in the streets of a poor city. The Christian delights to contemplate these memorials, in as much as they remind him that he ought to glory in God alone.

The vigour of Luther's intellect, the liveliness of his imagination and his excellent memory, enabled him speedily to out-

strip all his fellow students;¹ and he made rapid progress particularly in the ancient languages, in eloquence, and in poetry. He wrote discourses and made verses. Gay, obliging, and what is called good-hearted, he endeared himself to his masters and his comrades.

Among the professors, he attached himself particularly to John Trebonius, a learned man, of pleasant address, and who in his behaviour to the young, had that kindly manner which does so much to encourage them. Martin observed that on entering the class-room, Trebonius uncovered his head and saluted his scholars—a piece of great condescension in those pedantic times! This pleased the young man. He saw, too, that it was of some consequence. The respect shown to him by his master, raised the student in his own eyes. The colleagues of Trebonius who did not follow the same practice, expressing to him one day their astonishment at such extreme condescension, he gave the following reply, which struck young Luther no less; “Among these boys there are men whom God will one day make burgomasters, chancellors, doctors, and magistrates. Though you do not see them yet invested with the badges of their dignities, it is but fair that you should show them respect.” Without doubt, the young scholar listened with pleasure to these words, and perhaps fancied himself already decked with a doctor’s bonnet.

II. Luther had now reached his eighteenth year, had tasted the sweets of literature, and in his burning desire for farther attainments, sighed for an university. Fain would he quench his thirst for knowledge at one of those fountain-heads of all the sciences.² His father insisted on his studying law. In the confidence of his expectations from the talents of his son, he wished him to cultivate them so as to exhibit them to advantage before the world. Already he saw his son filling posts of honour among his fellow-citizens, gaining the favour of princes, and shining on the public scene. In short, it was resolved that the young man should go to Erfurt.

Luther entered that university in 1501, while Jodicus, sur-

¹ Cumque et vis ingenii acerrima esset, et imprimis ad eloquentiam idonea, celeriter equalibus suis præcurrit. (Melancht. Vita Lutheri.)

² Degustatâ igitur litterarum dulcedine, natura flagrans cupiditate ascendendi, appetit academiam. (Melan., Vit. Luth.)

named the doctor of Isenac, was teaching the scholastic philosophy there with much success. Melanchthon expresses his regret that nothing was then taught at Erfurt, but a system of dialectics hedged about with difficulties; and thinks that had Luther found other professors,—that had he been instructed in the milder and calmer methods of true philosophy, it might have tempered and softened his natural vehemence.¹ Here, then, the new disciple gave himself to the study of the philosophy of the middle ages, in the writings of Occam, Scot, Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas. The whole of this scholastic philosophy he afterwards regarded with horror. He would tremble with indignation were the name of Aristotle uttered in his presence, and went so far as to say that had Aristotle not been a man, he would not have scrupled to take him for the devil. But even now his mind's appetite for learning was looking out for better food; he began to study the beautiful monuments of antiquity,—the writings of Cicero, Virgil, and the other classics. Not content, like the common herd of students, with learning the productions of such authors by heart, his grand object was to render himself thoroughly master of their thoughts, make their wisdom his own, comprehend the design with which they wrote, and enrich his mind with their weighty sentences, and glowing images. He put numerous questions to the professors, and soon surpassed many of his equals.² Endued with a strong memory and fine imagination, his mind seemed able, at any time, to recall what he had read or heard, as if he beheld it with his own eyes. "Thus did Luther shine in his youth. The whole university," says Melanchthon, "admired his genius."³

But even at this early period our young man of eighteen had more to occupy him than the mere cultivation of his understanding; he had that seriousness and thoughtfulness, that upward tendency of the heart, which God bestows on such as he intends to make his most zealous servants. Luther felt that he depended on God; a simple but powerful feeling, and the

¹ Et fortassis ad leniendum vehementiam naturæ mitiora studia veræ philosophiæ.—(IBID)

² Et quidem inter primos, ingenio studioque multos co-æqualium antecellabat. (Cochlæus, Acta Lutheri, p. 1.)

³ Sic igitur in juventute eminebat, ut toti academix Lutheri ingenium admirationi esset. (Vita Lutheri.)

source at once of deep humility, and of great actions. He fervently implored God to bless his labours; beginning the day with prayer, then going to church; after that, sitting down to study, and not losing a moment during the whole course of the day. "Earnest prayer," he used to say, "is more than the half of study."¹

Every moment that could be spared from his academical labours, the young student now spent in the university library. Books were as yet ill to be had, and access to the treasures brought together in that vast collection, was to him a great privilege. After having been two years at Erfurt, and being then about twenty, he happened one day to be turning over a number of books in the library, to see who their authors were; a volume which he opened in its turn, struck his attention; until that hour he had seen nothing resembling it; he reads the title—it was a Bible! a book which was at that time seldom to be met with and unknown.² It excited his liveliest interest; he was utterly astonished to find that the book contained something beyond the fragments taken from the gospels and epistles, and selected by the Church, for people to read at public worship for each successive Sunday in the year. He had always thought that in these was comprised the whole word of God; but here he found pages, chapters, entire books, of which he never had had an idea before! His heart beat high as he held in his hands the whole of that Scripture which is divinely inspired. With an eagerness and interest that no words could express, he ran over all those leaves of the Book of God.³ The first page that caught his attention, told him the story of Hannah and the boy Samuel, and in reading it he could hardly contain himself with delight. That child, lent by his parents to the Lord for the whole of his life; the song of Hannah in which she declares that the Lord raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar out of the dunghill, to set him among princes; the boy Samuel growing up in the temple before the Lord—that whole history—that whole word then discovered,

¹ Fleissig gebet, ist uber die helfft stadirt. (Mathes. 3.)

² Auf ein Zeyt, wie er die Bücher fein nacheinander besieht. . . . kombt er über die lateinische Biblia. . . . (Mathes. 3.)

³ Avide percurrit, cœpitque optare ut olim talem librum et ipse nancisci posset. . . . (M. Adami. Vit. Luth. p. 103.)

made him experience feelings till then unknown to him. He went home with a full heart, thinking: "O that God would give me such a book to be my own!" Luther did not yet know Greek or Hebrew. There is little probability of his having studied those tongues during the two or three first years of his university course, and it was a Latin Bible that had thrown him into such a transport of joy. He was not long of returning to his treasure in the library; he read, and read again; and with mingled surprise and delight, he still returned to read. It was then that the first dawn of a truth, entirely new to him, gleamed upon his mind.

Thus did God put his word into his hands. Thus did he discover the book, of which he was one day to present his country with that admirable translation in which Germany has now, for three centuries, read the oracles of God. Perhaps for the first time, a hand takes down this precious volume from its place in the library at Erfurt; and the book, thus deposited on the unknown shelves of an obscure hall, is destined to become a book of life to a whole people. The Reformation lay hid in that Bible.

That same year Luther obtained his first academical step, that of bachelor.

The excessive exertions he had made in preparing for his examinations, threw him into a dangerous illness. Death seemed to be at hand. His mind was absorbed with grave reflections, and he thought his earthly career was about to close. People felt sorry for the youth; it was thought a pity that such high hopes should be so speedily extinguished. Several friends came to see him on his sick-bed, and among these was a venerable old priest who had watched with interest the academical life and labour of the student from Mansfeld. Luther could not conceal his thoughts from him: "Soon," said he, "I shall be called away from this world." But the old man kindly replied: "Don't lose heart, my good bachelor; you will not die of this illness. Our God will yet make of you a man who in his turn will console many.¹ For God makes his cross to be borne by those whom he loves, and they who bear it with patience learn much wisdom thereby." The young patient was much struck with

¹ Deus te virum faciet qui alios multos iterum consolabitur. (M. Adami Vita Luth. p. 103.)

these words. It was while thus at the point of death, he heard from the mouth of a priest that God, as the mother of Samuel had said, *raiseth up the wretched*. The old man shed sweet comfort over his heart, revived his drooping spirits, and made an impression that was never to be effaced. "This was the first prediction the doctor had ever heard," says Mathesius, the friend of Luther, in relating this incident, "and he used to recall it." We need not say in what sense Mathesius calls the saying a prediction.

On Luther's recovery, he was no longer quite the same man. The Bible, his illness, and the words addressed to him by the old priest, seemed to present a new call to him. Yet his mind was incapable of forming any fixed resolution; he returned to his studies, and in 1505, was made master of arts or doctor in philosophy. The university of Erfurt was then the most famed in Germany; the others were but like inferior schools in comparison; the ceremonial, as was customary, was pompously conducted, and Luther had homage paid to him by a procession accompanied with flambeaux.¹ The festival was superb. All were rejoicing, and Luther may have been so far cheered by these honours as to think of complying with his father's wishes, and devoting himself entirely to jurisprudence.

But such was not the will of God. While Luther was engaged with a variety of studies, and beginning to teach the physics and ethics of Aristotle and other branches of philosophy, his heart never ceased to urge upon him that godliness was the one thing needful, and that before all things else he ought to be assured of his salvation. He knew that God had testified his anger against sin; he recollected the punishments which his word denounces against the sinner; and he asked himself with alarm, whether he was sure of possessing the divine favour. His conscience tells him: No. The promptitude and decision of his character made him resolve to do his utmost to assure himself of a firm hope of immortality, and, while in this state, two events successively contributed to shake his soul and precipitate his purpose.

Among his university friends he was very intimate with

¹ L. Opp. W. xxii. p 2229.

one named Alexis. One morning it was rumoured in Erfurt that Alexis had been assassinated. Luther ascertains the fact, and is much agitated by this sudden loss of his friend. He asks himself: "What would become of me on receiving as sudden a call?" and is terror-struck.¹

In the course of the summer of 1505, Luther availed himself of the usual university vacation to make a journey to Mansfeld, with the view of revisiting the cherished scenes of his childhood, and again embracing his beloved parents. Possibly, too, he may have wished to open his heart to his dear father, to sound him on the subject of the design that now began to form itself in his mind, and to obtain his consent to follow another calling. He foresaw all the difficulties that would attend it. The bustling miner of Mansfeld despised the lazy life of most of the priests; besides, ecclesiastics were little esteemed by the world; most had a paltry income, and a father who, after many sacrifices to support his son at the university, saw him commence as a public teacher in a celebrated school, when only in his twentieth year, was not at all disposed to relinquish hopes so flattering to his pride.

We have no means of knowing what transpired during Luther's stay at Mansfeld. The decided manner in which his father had expressed his wishes, may have made him afraid to open his heart to him. We only know that he again left his father's home to resume his place on the benches of the academy. He was at but a short distance from Erfurt when a violent storm overtook him. The thunder rolled and the lightning fell at his sides. Luther threw himself on his knees. He seemed to think that his last hour might be come. Death, judgment, and eternity, stood in dread array around him, and addressed him in a voice which it was impossible for him to resist. "Overwhelmed with anguish and the dread of death,"² as he himself tells us, he makes a vow that if the Lord will deliver him from his danger, he will abandon the world, and devote himself entirely to God. On rising from the ground, he cannot dismiss from his thoughts that death which must one day overtake him; he seriously examines himself and inquires

¹ Interitu sodalis sui contristatus. (Cochlæus, p. i.)

² Mit Erschrecken und Angst des Todes umgeben. (L. Epp. ii. 101.)

³ Cum esset in campo, fulminis ictu territus. (Cochlæus, I.)

what he must do. ¹ He feels more than ever the urgency of his previous reflections. True, he has endeavoured to discharge all his duties; but how does it stand with his soul? Can he dare with a polluted heart to appear before the tribunal of so terrible a God? He must become holy; and he now thirsts after holiness as he had thirsted after knowledge. But where is he to find it? How shall he acquire it? The university has supplied means for satisfying his first desires; but who shall slake the burning thirst that now consumes him? To what school of holiness shall he now direct his steps? He must go to a cloister; he must find his salvation in a monastic life. How often has he been told of its power in transforming the heart, sanctifying the sinner, and making man perfect! He resolves to enter into one of the monastic orders, there to become holy, and thus make sure of everlasting salvation. ²

Such was the incident that altered the vocation and whole destiny of Luther, and we must recognise in it the finger of God. It was his mighty hand that brought to his knees on the highway the young master of arts, the aspirant to the bar, the future juriconsult, for the purpose of entirely altering his whole plan of life. Rubianus, one of Luther's university friends, afterwards wrote to him: "Divine Providence had an eye to what you was one day to become, when, on your way back from your parents, the bolts of heaven struck you to the ground like another Paul, near the town of Erfurt, and removing you from our society, thrust you among the followers of Augustine." Analogous circumstances marked the conversion of the two greatest organs employed by divine Providence in the two greatest revolutions it has ever wrought on the earth: St Paul and Luther. ³

¹ *Occasio autem fuit ingrediendi illud vitæ genus, quod pietati et studiis Joctrinæ de Deo, existimavit esse convenientius.* (Mel., Vit. Luth.)

² Some historians say that Alexis was killed by the stroke of lightning that terrified Luther; but two contemporaries, Mathesius (p. 4.) and Selnecker (in *Orat. de Luth.*), distinguish between these two events; to whose testimony we may even add that of Melancthon, who says; "a companion slain I know not how." (*Vita Luth.*)

³ The comparison here adopted by the worthy author from the reported saying of Luther's friend Rubianus, between what befell Paul and the incident related of Luther, may be so far justified, in as much as both were overwhelmed by something uncommon and powerfully affecting the senses, which in both cases greatly influenced the subsequent lives, sentiments, and vocations of the persons affected. Still, I conceive, that the parallel had better be avoided, at least that it should not be carried beyond a metaphorical sense, as Rubianus seems to have meant. In the case of Paul, the incident was not merely extraordinary—

Luther returned to Erfurt with a resolution that nothing could shake, and yet it was not without pain that he proceeded to cut ties which were so dear to him. Imparting his purpose to no one, he one evening invited his university friends to a cheerful though frugal repast. This meeting of intimate friends was once more enlivened with music. It was to be Luther's last farewell to the world. Henceforth monks were to take the place of the amiable companions of his pleasures and his toils; the stillness of the cloister was to succeed to this gay and witty talk; and instead of these lively airs, he was to hear but the solemn tones of a quiet chapel. At what he considered to be the call of God, all was to be immolated. In the mean while, once more, and for the last time, he would indulge in the joys of his youth! The entertainment put his friends into good spirits, and Luther himself enlivened the party. But just as they began to give free scope to their gaiety, the youth could no longer keep down the serious reflections that filled his heart. He speaks. . . he opens his design to his astonished friends. These attempt to combat it, but in vain. And that very night, dreading perhaps what the effect of such solicitations might be, Luther quits his apartment. There he leaves his whole effects, including all his books, and taking with him only Virgil and Plautus, for as yet he had no Bible. Virgil and Plautus! epic poetry and comedy! singular picture of Luther's own mind! In fact, a whole epic was

it was supernatural; a divine light appearing suddenly, and for that one purpose; in that of Luther it was only a natural event, overruled by Providence. The light that shone upon Paul was literally to work towards his conversion, while he was an enemy and persecutor of Jesus and his people. This was not so with Luther, for, according to the preceding narrative, he was already the subject of serious thoughts, which were only strengthened by the incident, while all of an opposite tendency were set aside by it. By the light that shone upon Paul, he was turned immediately from a wrong path into the right one, so as to repudiate all self-righteousness, and to look for righteousness thenceforth only in Christ. With Luther, on the contrary, the first result of the incident that had befallen him was the choice of what was really a perverted way, in which he still sought to establish his own righteousness, and that even more than ever: and it was only by the farther divine guidance which he experienced, that he at length entered on the right way; and then it afterwards appeared that that very incident was to serve, not immediately to discover to him the right way, but, on the contrary, to co-operate with subsequent leadings, in convincing him experimentally of the insufficiency of the way which most people at that time chose for procuring peace to an unquiet conscience. Such, I believe, was Luther's own view of the matter in after life; regarding that incident not as the commencement of his conversion, but as one of those remarkable divine leadings, whose mutual co-operation, after manifold struggles and vain efforts, was finally to reveal to him the true consolations of the gospel, and thus to fit him for declaring these to others.—L. R.

comprised in him; a beautiful, a grand, a sublime poem; but with a natural tendency to gaiety, pleasantry, and drollery, he mingled more than one familiar thread with the grave and magnificent staple of his character.

Carrying those two books with him, he went alone, and in the dark, to the monastery of the hermits of St. Augustine, and craved admission. The door opens and shuts him in. And now behold him for ever separated from his parents, from the companions of his studies, and from the world! This happened on the 17th of August, 1505. Luther at the time was twenty-one years and nine months old.

III. And now he thought himself to be with God, and that all was safe with his soul. Now was he about to find the sanctity he had so earnestly been desiring. The monks were filled with admiration at the sight of this young doctor, and spoke in loud praise of his courage and contempt for earthly things.¹ Luther did not, however, forget his friends, but wrote them farewell letters, in which he took leave of them and of the world; and, next day, sent these off, together with the clothes he had previously worn, and his master of arts' ring, which he restored to the university, that there might be nothing to tempt his thoughts to return to the world which he abandoned.

His Erfurt friends were confounded. Should so eminent a genius go to shut himself up in the half-death of the monastic life?² In the intensity of their grief they hastened to the monastery, hoping to prevail on Luther to retrace so afflicting a step, but all was to no purpose. The gates were shut upon them, and a whole month passed without any one being able to see the new monk, or to exchange a word with him.

To his parents, also, Luther was in haste to communicate the great change that had taken place in his life. His father was in consternation at the news. Luther himself tells us, in the dedication of his work on the monastic vows, addressed to his father, that the latter trembled for his son. His weakness, his youth, the violence of his passions, all made him fear that when the first moments of enthusiasm were over, want of occupation

¹ *Hujus mundi contemptu, ingressus est repente, multis admirantibus, monasterium . . .* (Cochläus, i.)

² *In vita semi-mortua.* (Melch. Adami. Vit. Luth. p. 102.)

in a cloister might drive the youth to despair, or make him fall into worse faults. He knew that that kind of life had been the destruction of many, and, besides, the councillor of Mansfeld had other plans for his son to follow. He had had an eye to his making a rich and honourable marriage, but now this imprudent step had, in one night, upset all his schemes.

John wrote to his son a very angry letter, in which, Luther farther tells us, his father *theed* and *thoud* him, whereas he had *youd* him ever since he had taken his degree of master of arts. He withdrew his whole favour from him, and declared him disinherited of his paternal affection. In vain did the friends of Luther, and his mother in particular, endeavour to soften him; in vain did they say: "If you would sacrifice anything to God, what better or dearer to you than your son,—your Isaac?" the inexorable councillor would listen to nothing.

Some time afterwards, however, and this, too, we have from Luther, who relates it in a sermon delivered at Wittemberg on the 20th of January, 1544, the plague broke out and carried off two of John Luther's other sons. On this occasion, some one told the almost heart-broken father that the monk of Erfurt was dead also! . . . This opportunity was taken advantage of to restore the novice to his place in his father's affections. "If the alarm prove false," said his friends, "sanctify at least your affliction by heartily consenting to your son's becoming a monk." . . . "Agreed," was the reply of John Luther, with a crushed though still half-rebellious heart, "and God grant he may succeed!" Some time after, when Luther, who had been reconciled with his father, related to him the incident which had induced him to throw himself into monastic orders: "God grant," said the honest miner, "that you did not take to be a sign from heaven what was but a delusion of the devil!"¹

There was not then to be found in Luther what was afterwards to make him the Reformer of the Church, and this is proved by his going into a monastery; an action in which he followed the tendency of that order of things from which he was ere long to assist in delivering the Church. The man who was to become the teacher of the world, was as yet but its slavish imitator;

¹ Gott geb dass es nicht ein Betrug und teuflisch Gespenst sey! (L. Epp. ii. p. 101.)

and the edifice of superstitions had a stone added to it by him who was soon to overturn it. Luther sought for salvation in himself—in human practices and observances;—he knew not as yet that salvation came wholly from God. He would have his own righteousness, and his own glory, without owning the righteousness and the glory of the Lord. But what as yet he knew not, he was soon to learn, and it was in the cloister of Erfurt that that immense change was effected which gave to God and his glory the place in his heart previously occupied by the world and its traditions; thus preparing that mighty revolution of which he was the most illustrious instrument.

On his entering the monastery, Martin Luther changed his name, and took that of Augustine. “What more insensate or more impious,” he would say, mentioning this circumstance, “than to reject a baptismal name out of love for a monk’s hood! It is thus that the Popes are ashamed of the names they received at their baptism, and in this manner show that they are deserters from Jesus Christ.”¹

The monks had given him a joyful welcome; and, indeed, it was no small gratification to their self-conceit, to see the university abandoned by one of its most esteemed doctors, for a house of their order. Nevertheless, they gave him harsh enough treatment, and imposed on him the lowest labours. They would fain humble the doctor in philosophy, and teach him that his learning did not set him above his fellow-friars. They thought, likewise, thereby to prevent him from engaging in what could bring so little profit to the monastery as his studies. The late master of arts had to act as porter, had to open and shut the gates, wind up the clock, sweep out the church, and clean the rooms.² Then, when the poor monk who was at once door-keeper, sacristan, and household servant to the cloister, was done with his work, *Cum sacco per civitatem!* Through the town with the bag! cried the friars; and he had to go through the streets of Erfurt with his bread sack, begging from house to house, and obliged perhaps to present himself at the doors of those who had been his friends or his inferiors. But he submitted to it all. Led by his character to consecrate himself

¹ On Gen. xxxiv. 3.

² *Loca immunda purgare coactus fuit.* (Melch. Ad. Vit. Luth. p. 103.)

without reserve to whatever he might undertake, it was with his whole soul that he had become a monk. How, besides, could he dream of sparing his body, or pay any regard to the satisfaction of the flesh? It was not thus that he was to acquire the humility and the sanctity which he had come to seek within the walls of a cloister!

Weighed down by his sufferings, the poor monk eagerly availed himself of every moment he could spare from his base occupations to bestow upon learning. He would gladly retire in order to devote himself to his favourite studies, but the monks would soon find him out, would come about him, grumble at him, and take him away from his labours, saying to him: "Come, come, it is not by study that people make themselves useful to a monastery, but by begging for bread, wheat, eggs, fish, meat, and money.¹ Luther would submit, put aside his books, and resume his bag. Yet far from repenting his having brought such a yoke on himself, he wanted only to carry out his purpose to the utmost; and then it was that he showed the inflexible perseverance wherewith he ever followed out the resolutions he had once formed. The resistance he opposed to rude assaults gave a powerful tone to his will. God was now exercising him in small things, that he might acquire stedfastness in things that were great. Besides, in order to become fit for delivering the age in which he lived from the wretched superstitions beneath which it lay groaning, he behoved first to bear the burden himself. He had to drink out the dregs of the cup before it could be emptied.

Yet this rough apprenticeship did not last so long as Luther might have feared; for at the intercession of the university of which he was a member, the prior of the monastery relieved him of the base offices with which he had been charged. The young monk then devoted himself to study with fresh zeal. His attention was drawn to the works of the fathers of the Church, particularly to those of St. Augustine. That illustrious doctor's exposition of the Psalms, and his work *On the Letter and the Spirit*, were his favourite compositions. Nothing struck him more than that father's views on the corruption of man's will, and on divine grace; he felt in his own experience the

¹ Selnecceri Orat. de Luth. (Mathesius, p. 5.)

reality of that corruption, and the necessity for that grace; the words of St. Augustine were an echo to his own heart and could he have been of any school but that of Jesus Christ, it would undoubtedly have been that of the doctor of Hippo. He could almost repeat by heart the works of Peter d'Ailly and Gabriel Biel.¹ He was struck with a saying of the former, that had not the Church decided the contrary way, it were much to be preferred that we should really receive bread and wine, and not their mere appearances, in the Holy Supper.²

He carefully studied, also, the theologians Occam³ and Ger-

¹ Peter d'Ailly and Gabriel Biel were two famous schoolmen of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, both of the sect of the so-called Nominalists—both clear-thinking men, who did much to discredit the hair-splitting scholasticism of that period. Peter d'Ailly, or de Alliaco, was chancellor of the university of Paris, afterwards bishop of Puy and Cambray, and finally a cardinal, in which dignity he died in 1425. He belonged to that party among the philosophers and theologians who endeavoured to combine the acuteness of the Schoolmen with the simplicity of the Mystics. Gabriel Biel was provost of Aurach, and professor of theology and philosophy at Tübingen, where he died in 1495.—L. R.

² This refers to one of those subtleties by which the scholastic theologians of that time sought to uphold and demonstrate the doctrine of transubstantiation against the plain evidence of the senses. These ever plainly witness, that even after the supposed change of the bread and wine in the Supper, into the body and blood of Christ, yet nothing but the appearance, smell, taste, and other qualities of bread and wine are received. In opposition to this, a distinction is made between substance and qualities, it being maintained that the former has undergone a change, while the latter remain as before; however much this ran contrary to simple comprehension, which plainly teaches us that substance and qualities cannot be separated, since the former is known by the latter, and the latter are determined by the former. Peter d'Ailly was fully sensible of this. It would, however, have been dangerous for him at that time to have spoken it fully out. He therefore dissembled it under the cautious limitation: "provided the Church shall have declared nothing to the contrary." Meanwhile he clearly enough showed by this what he really thought.—L. R.

³ William Occam, a Franciscan monk, born in England, but afterwards professor of theology at Paris in the fourteenth century, was the chief Nominalist of his time, and brought that doctrine into fresh and great repute. It consisted in this, that general ideas serve only as certain general names for particular things, and have thus no existence beyond the understanding that conceives them. Opposed to this were the sentiments of the Realists, who ascribed a certain independent existence to generals, and held them to be actual things. Thus the sentiments of the Nominalists answered better to the dictates of common sense; while those of the Realists formed a better weapon for subtle theologians to employ in maintaining the absurdities of their hypothesis. No wonder, then, that the Nominalists, and with them Occam, incurred the hatred of the clergy and of the popes, against whose pretensions, and particularly those of pope John XXII., Occam so vigorously opposed himself, that he was persecuted; but being taken under the protection of the emperor, Louis of Bavaria, whose cause he had defended against the Pope, he took up his residence at Munich, and died there betwixt 1343 and 1347. He by no means allowed himself to be silenced by persecution, but even while it lasted, gave a deadly blow by his spirited satires to papal ambition, and to the consideration enjoyed by the popes.—L. R.

son,¹ who both express themselves so freely on the authority of the Popes; and to this course of reading he added other engagements. In public disputations he would disentangle the most complex reasonings, and thread his way out of labyrinths where others could find no outlet. On such occasions he would keep all who heard him fixt with admiration as he spoke.²

But it was not with the view of earning the reputation of a great genius that he had entered a monastery; it was that he might there look for wherewithal to nourish piety, and accordingly he regarded these as merely by-works.³

He was fond, above all things, of drawing wisdom from the pure fountain-head of the Word of God. Finding in the monastery a Bible attached to a chain, he was perpetually returning to that chained Bible; and little as he understood the Word, still it formed his most delightful reading. He would pass a whole day at times, in meditating on a single passage; at other times, he would commit to memory fragments of the prophets. His chief desire was that the writings of the apostles and the prophets, might serve to give him a thorough knowledge of the will of God, might increase his fear of God's name, and nourish his faith by the sure testimonies of the Word.⁴

It would appear that it was at this period that he began to study the Scriptures in the original tongues, thus laying the foundation of the most perfect and the most useful of all his works, his translation of the Bible. He availed himself of a Hebrew lexicon which had been given to the world by Reuchlin;

¹ John Gerson was another great leader of the Nominalists in the fifteenth century, a pupil of the above-mentioned Peter d'Ailly, and his successor as chancellor of the university of Paris. He, in some measure, combined Mysticism with Scholasticism, and chiefly insisted on practical Christianity. He was a vigorous assertor of the liberties of the Church against the tyranny of the popes, and particularly shone in that character at the famous Council of Constance, at which he had not a little to do with the decrees to the prejudice of the pope's supremacy, passed at that council, besides showing no respect in his writings for the corruptions of the Church. Nevertheless, it is to be lamented that from the personal ill-will he bore, as a Nominalist, to John Huss, who belonged to the Realists, he tarnished his good name by taking part in the condemnation and death of that witness to the truth. He was himself in turn persecuted by the clergy who opposed his sentiments, and being banished from the university of Paris, died at Lyons in 1429.—L. R.

² In disputationibus publicis labyrinthos aliis inextricabiles, diserte, multis admirantibus, explicabat. (Melancht. Vita Lutheri.)

³ In eo vitæ genere non famam ingenii, sed alimenta pietatis quærebat (Ibid.)

⁴ Et firmis testimoniis aleret timorem et fidem. (Ibid.)

and it is probable that John Lange, a friar in the same monastery, who was versed in Greek and Hebrew, and with whom he ever maintained a strict intimacy, gave him his first directions.¹ He made ample use, also, of the learned commentaries of Nicolas Lyra,² who died in 1340; a fact which led Pflug, afterwards bishop of Naumburg, to say, that if Lyra had not played on his lyre, Luther would never have danced: *Si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset.*

Such was the young monk's application and zeal in study, that he would often for two or three weeks together omit his hours. But by and by, he felt alarmed at the idea of having transgressed the rules of his order, and thereupon would shut himself up for the purpose of compensating for such neglect. He then set himself conscientiously to repeat all his omitted hours, without thinking either of eating or drinking; and once he even lost his sleep for seven weeks.

Burning with the desire of attaining to the sanctity he had come in search of to the monastery, Luther gave himself over to the most rigid practices of the ascetic life.³ He sought to crucify his flesh by fasting, maceration and watching. Shut up in his cell, as if in a prison, he struggled unremittingly with the bad thoughts and evil propensities of his heart. A little bread and a lean herring, were often his only food. We must add that he was naturally very sober;⁴ so that even when he no longer thought of purchasing heaven by his abstinences, his friends would see him often content himself with the meanest fare, and remain even four successive days without meat or drink. The witness who relates this is well worthy of credit, for it is no other than Melancthon; and it enables us to judge of those fables which have been spread abroad by ignorance and prejudice, as to Luther's intemperance. At the time of which we are

¹ Gesch. d. deutsch. Bibelübersetzung.

² A distinguished commentator on Scripture in the fourteenth century, who being deeply versed in the ancient tongues, (less, some say, in Greek than in Hebrew) expounded all the books of the Old and New Testament, in a manner far above the taste of that age, and in this respect, was a most useful forerunner to Luther —L. R.

³ Summa disciplinæ severitate se ipse regit, et omnibus exercitiis lectionum, disputationum, jejuniorum, precum, omnes longo superat. (Melanct. Vita Lutheri.)

⁴ Erat enim natura, valde modici cibi et potus; vidi continuis quatuor diebus cum quidem recto valeret, prorsus nihil edentem aut bibentem. (Ibid.)

now treating, he spared no cost that he might become a saint, and obtain heaven. Never did the church of Rome possess a more pious monk. Never did a monastery see a man toil more sincerely or indefatigably, in order to purchase for himself everlasting happiness. When Luther, after he had become a Reformer, said that heaven was not to be bought, he well knew what that implied. "Verily," he wrote to duke George of Saxony, "I was a pious monk, and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever monk entered heaven in virtue of his monkery, assuredly I should have gone there. This all the monks who have known me can testify. A much longer time of it must have made me a martyr, even to death, what with watchings, prayers, reading, and other labours!"¹

We now touch upon the epoch which made Luther a new man, and which, by revealing to him the immensity of the love of God, put him into a condition to announce it to the world.

Luther by no means found in the quiet of the cloister, and in monkish perfection, the peace which he had come to seek. He wanted to be assured of his salvation: this was the grand desideratum in his soul. Without this, there was no rest there. Now, the same fears which had troubled him in the world, followed him into his cell. Still worse, they became aggravated there; and it seemed as if the feeblest cry of his heart was loudly re-echoed by the still and silent vaults of the monastery. God had led him thither that he might there learn self-knowledge, and to despair of his own powers and his own virtues. His conscience, enlightened by the divine Word, told him what was implied in being holy; but he was seized with dread on failing to discover, either in his heart or in his life, that image of holiness which he contemplated with admiration in the Word of God. Sad discovery which every sincere person must make. No righteousness within—no righteousness without; every where omission, sin, defilement. . . . The more ardent Luther's natural character, the stronger in him was that secret and constant resistance, which man's nature opposes to what is good, and the more did it throw him into despair.

The monks, and the theologians of the time, invited him to satisfy the divine justice by the practice of good works. But

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xix. 2299.

what works, thought he, can proceed from a heart like mine? How can I, with works defiled in their very principle, stand before my judge? "I found myself a great sinner before God," said he, "and I did not think it possible for me to appease Him by my works."

He was agitated and yet silent, shunning the idle and gross conversation of the monks, who in their inability to comprehend those storms which moved his inmost soul, looked at him with amazement,¹ and reproached him for his sombre looks and his silence. Cochläus relates that one day while they were saying mass in the chapel, Luther had brought thither his sighs, and had joined the friars in the choir, dejected and in anguish. Already the priest had thrown himself on the ground, the altar had been incensed, the *Gloria* chanted, and they were reading the Gospel for the day, when the poor monk, unable to restrain his agony, exclaimed in doleful accents and throwing himself on his knees: "It is not I! It is not I!"² The rest were confounded, and the solemnity was for a moment interrupted. Possibly, Luther may have thought that he was reproached with something of which he knew himself to be innocent; possibly, he might wish to declare himself unworthy to be one of those to whom the death of Christ had brought everlasting life. Cochläus says that the passage they were then reading, was that which relates the history of the dumb man, from whom our lord cast out a devil. If this were so, it is possible that Luther's exclamation may have had a reference to that circumstance, and that, dumb as that man, he protested by his cry, that his silence arose from another cause than possession by the devil. In fact, Cochläus informs us that the monks sometimes attributed their fellow friar's sufferings to secret commerce with the devil, and that writer himself is of the same opinion.³

The tenderness of Luther's conscience made him regard the smallest fault as a great sin; and hardly had he discovered such an offence in himself, than he would make an effort to expiate it by the severest mortifications; a course which only opened his eyes to the uselessness of all such human remedies. "I

¹ Visus est fratribus nonnihil singularitatis habere (Cochläus, i.)

² Cum. . . . repente ceciderit vociferans: Non sum! non sum! (Ibid.)

³ Ex occulto aliquo cum sermone comminatio (Cochläus, i.)

tormented myself to death," says he, "in order that I might procure the peace of God for my troubled heart and agitated conscience; but being surrounded with horrible darkness I groped for peace in vain."

The practices of monastic sanctity which lull so many consciences asleep, and to which, in his anguish, he had recourse himself, soon appeared to Luther but the useless remedies of an empirical and knavish religion. "In my state of monkhood, on finding myself assaulted by some temptation: I am lost! I would say to myself. Straightway I would fly to a thousand means of appeasing the cries of my heart. I confessed myself daily, but this availed me nothing. Then, weighed down with grief, I allowed myself to be tormented by the multitude of my thoughts. See, I cried to myself, see how envious, impatient and irascible you still are! . . . It is of no use to you, then, O wretched man, that you have entered this sacred order." . . .

Yet Luther was so imbued with the prejudices of his time, as from his youth up, to have considered those practices, the impotency of which he was now experiencing, to be the grand specifics for sickly souls. What was he to think of the strange discovery he had made in the solitude of the cloister? Can it be, then, that one may dwell in the sanctuary and yet bear about within him a man of sin! . . . He had put on another dress, but his heart remained the same. His hopes were blasted. Where was he to stop? Might not all these rules and observances be mere human inventions? Such a supposition appeared to him, at times, to be a temptation of the devil, and at times, too, an irresistible truth. Struggling by turns with the holy voice that was addressing itself to his heart, and with the venerable institutions sanctioned by the age in which he lived, Luther passed his life in unintermitted warfare. Meagre as a shadow, the young monk would pace the long passages of the monastery, making them answer in hollow echoes to his groans. His body was wearing itself out; vital energy seemed ready to leave it altogether, and it sometimes happened that he lay to appearance dead.¹

¹ *Sæpe eum cogitantem attentius de ira Dei aut de mirandis poenarum exemplis, subito tanti terrores concutiebant, ut pene exanimaretur.* (Melan. Vit. Luth.)

In the depth of his grief he one day shut himself up in his cell, and for several days and nights would suffer no one to come near him. On this, one of his friends, called Luke Edemberger, felt so disquieted about the unhappy monk, and had such a presentiment of his condition, that taking some boys with him who used to sing in the choirs, he went to the cell door and knocked. No one opened or answered. This frightened good Edemberger still more, so that he drove in the door; and there found Luther stretched out on the planks quite insensible and apparently lifeless. His friend endeavoured in vain to recall him to his senses: he lay motionless as ever. The boys then began to sing an hymn, to a low sweet air. Their clear voices acted like a charm on the poor monk, to whom music had ever been one of the highest enjoyments, and by little and little he recovered strength, self-recollection and vitality.¹ But although music for a few short moments, might restore some calm to his mind, another, and a more powerful remedy was required for his effectual cure. To effect that, he required the mild and insinuating tones of the gospel, which is the very voice of God. He well understood this, and, accordingly, his sorrows and his fears led him to study the writings of the apostles and the prophets with fresh zeal.²

IV. Luther was not the only monk who had passed through such struggles. Monasteries often screened in the obscurity of their walls, vices so abominable, as if discovered, would make a virtuous man shudder; but often, too, they concealed Christian virtues which grew up in silence and would have been admired, had they been known. The possessors of these virtues, living only with themselves and with their God, attracted no notice, and were often even unperceived by the modest monastery, or convent, that enclosed them. These humble *solitaries* sometimes fell into that mystic theology, sad malady of the noblest minds, which in by-gone times, was the delight of the monks on the borders of the Nile, and which uselessly consumes the souls of which it once gains possession.

Notwithstanding, if one of these happened to be called to a

¹ Seckendorf. p. 53,

² Hoc studium ut magis expeteret, illis suis doloribus et pavoribus movebatur. (Melancht. Vita. Luth.)

place of eminence, there he would find practical scope for good qualities, the healthful influence of which made itself long and widely felt. The candle was then put upon a candlestick, so as to give light to all who were in the house. Many were awakened by that light. Thus were such pious souls continued from generation to generation; and seen to blaze like torches held apart, even at times when monasteries were often but the impure receptacles of the thickest darkness.

A young man had distinguished himself in this manner, as an inmate of one of the monasteries of Germany. His name was John Staupitz, the descendant of a noble family in Misnia. From his earliest youth he had been marked by a taste for learning and by love of virtue;¹ had felt retirement necessary in order to the cultivation of literature; but soon found that philosophy, and the study of nature, could do little to secure everlasting salvation. But he sought chiefly to combine practice with learning; for, says one of his biographers, it is idle for one to have the name of theologian, if not confirmed by his life.² The study of the Bible and of the theology of St. Augustine, the knowledge of himself, the warfare which, like Luther, he had to wage with the deceits and evil desires of his heart, led him to the Redeemer. Faith in Christ brought peace to his soul. The doctrine of election by grace, particularly laid hold of his mind. He was recommended to his contemporaries by the uprightness of his life, the depth of his learning and his eloquence of speech, not less than by a stately figure, and by manners remarkable for their dignity.³ The elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, made him his friend; he employed him in various embassies, and under his direction founded the university of Wittemberg. This disciple of St. Paul and St. Augustine, was the first dean of the theological faculty of that school, which was soon to become a source of illumination to the schools and the churches of many nations. He represented the archbishop of Salzburg in the council of Lateran, became provincial of his order in Thuringia and Saxony, and afterwards, its vicar-general for all Germany.

Staupitz groaned under the corruption of manners, and the

¹ *A teneris unguiculis, generoso animi impetu, ad virtutem et eruditam doctrinam contendit.* (Melch. Adam. *Vita Staupitzii.*)

² *Ibid.* ³ *Corporis forma atque statura conspicuus.* (Cochl. 3.)

errors in doctrine, which desolated the Church, as may be seen from his writings on the love of God, on Christian faith, on conformity to the death of Christ, and from the testimony of Luther. But of these evils, he looked upon the former as by far the greater; and, besides, the gentleness and indecision of his character, and his reluctance to quit the sphere which he considered to be assigned to him, made him far more fit to restore a monastery than to reform the Church. He wished to fill important offices with none but distinguished men; such, however, being not to be found, he had of necessity to employ others. "One must till the ground," said he, "with the best cattle we can find, and if we cannot have horses, we must use oxen."¹

We have remarked the anguish and inward struggles to which Luther was a prey in the monastery at Erfurt, and while he was in this condition, the visitation of the vicar-general was announced. Staupitz had arrived to make his ordinary inspection. This friend of Frederick, this founder of the university of Wittemberg, this chief of the Augustines, was full of kindly feeling to the monks subject to his authority, but his attention was particularly attracted by one of the friars—a young man of middle stature, made thin by study, abstinence, and watching, so that all his bones might have been counted.² His eyes, which were afterwards thought like those of a hawk, were cast down; his bearing was sorrowful, his looks discovered the agitation of a soul tossed by a thousand struggles, yet retaining its strength and unwilling to succumb. His general aspect bespoke seriousness, melancholy, and solemnity. Long experience had sharpened the discernment of Staupitz; he found no difficulty in discovering what was passing in that soul, and signaled out this young man from among all who surrounded him. He felt himself drawn towards him, had a presentiment of his high destinies, and took quite a fatherly interest in this subordinate friar. He, too, like Luther, had had his own struggles, and therefore could comprehend his case; and, in particular, he could point out to him that path of peace which he himself had found. This fellow-feeling was farther augmented by what he learned of the circumstances which had brought the young Augustinian to the monastery. He suggested to the prior that

¹ L. Opp. (W.) V. 2139.

² P. Mosellani Epis:.

he should deal with him more gently, and he availed himself of the opportunities which his office afforded of gaining this young brother's confidence. Affectionately approaching him, he sought by every means to dissipate that timidity of his, which must have been farther augmented by the respect and awe inspired by a man of Staupitz's exalted rank.

At length did Luther's heart, hitherto closed by harsh treatment, open and dilate itself before the kindly rays of Christian affection. *As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.*¹ The heart of Staupitz answered to that of Luther. The vicar-general understood him, and the monk felt a confidence in his new friend which he had never felt in any one else. He opened to him the cause of his distress of mind, laid before him the horrible thoughts that agitated him, and thus did there commence within the cloisters of Erfurt conversations replete with wisdom and instruction.

"In vain," said the dejected Luther to Staupitz, "do I make promises to God; sin is ever the stronger of the two."

"O my friend," replied the vicar-general, returning to his own case, "I have vowed more than a thousand times to the holy God to live piously, but never have I kept my vow. Now, I have no wish to swear thus any more, for I know that I shall not keep to it. If God refuse to be gracious to me for the love of Christ, and to give me a happy exit when called to leave this world, I could not, with all my vows and all my good works, stand before him. I must perish."²

The young monk, terrified at the thought of divine justice, lays open all his fears to the vicar-general. God's unspeakable holiness and sovereign majesty alarm him. Who can abide the day of his coming? Who can stand when he shall appear?

Staupitz resumes. Knowing where he has found peace himself, he proceeds to point it out to the young man. "Why," he says to him, "will you torment yourself with these high thoughts and speculations? . . . Look to the wounds of Jesus Christ; to the blood which he has shed for thee: it is there that thou wilt discover the grace of God. Instead of making thyself a martyr for thine offences, cast thyself into thy Redeemer's arms. Trust thyself to him; to the righteousness

¹ Proverbs xxvii. 19.

² L. Opp. (W) vii, 272a

of his life; to the expiation of his death. Shrink not from doing this. God is not angry with thee; it is thou that art angry with God. Listen to the Son of God. He became man that he might give thee assurance of the divine favour. He says to thee: Thou art my sheep; thou hearest my voice; none shall ever pluck thee out of my hand."¹

But Luther could not find in himself the repentance which he thought necessary to salvation: he replied, and it is the common reply of anguished and fearful souls: "How shall I dare to believe in the favour of God, as long as there is no true conversion in me? I must be changed before He accepts me."

His venerable guide showed him that there can be no true conversion, so long as man dreads God as a severe judge. "What say you, then," exclaimed Luther, "of so many consciences having a thousand intolerable ordinances prescribed to them, in order that they may gain heaven?"

Then it was that he heard the following reply from the vicar-general, or rather he does not believe that it comes from a man; it seems as if it were a voice resounding from heaven:² "There is no true repentance," says Staupitz, "but that which begins with the love of God and of righteousness.³ What others imagine to be the end and the completion of repentance, is no more, on the contrary, than its commencement. If thou wouldst be replenished with love for what is good, thou must first of all be replenished with love for God. If thou wouldst be converted, endeavour not after all these macerations and all these martyrdoms. Love Him who first loved thee."

Luther listened, and listened still. These words of comfort filled him with a joy till then unknown, and introduced a new light into his soul. "It is Jesus Christ," thought he in his heart, "yes, it is Jesus Christ himself who so admirably consoles me with his mild and health-giving words."⁴

These words, in fact, pierced the young monk's inmost soul like the sharpened arrow of a mighty man.⁵ In order to repent-

¹ L. Opp. (W) ii. 264.

² Te velut e cœlo sonantem accepimus. (L. Epp. i. 115, ad Staupitzium, 30th May, 1518.)

³ Penitentia verò non est, nisi quæ ab amore justitiæ et Dei incipit, etc. (Ibid.)

⁴ Memini inter jucundissimas et salutare fabulas tuas, quibus me solet Dominus Jesus mirifice consolari. (L. Epp. i. 115, ad Staupitzium, 30 May, 1518.)

⁵ Hæsit hoc verbum tuum in me, sicut sagitta potentis acuta. (Ibid.)

ance, we must love God. Struck by this new light, he began to compare scripture with scripture. He looked for all the passages in which repentance and conversion are mentioned; and these, till then so much dreaded, to use his own expressions, became a most pleasant game to him, and the most delightful of recreations. All the passages of scripture which had frightened him, now seemed as if coming up to him from all parts, smiling and leaping around him, and playing with him.”¹

“Up to this time,” he cried, “however carefully I might dissemble the state of my heart before God, and compel myself to express a love for him which was but constrained and fictitious, there was no word in scripture more bitter than that of *repentance*. But now there is not one sweeter or more agreeable.”² Oh! how sweet are God’s precepts, when we read them not only in books, but also in the precious wounds of the Saviour.”³

Comforted, however, as Luther was by the words of Staupitz, he sometimes relapsed into low spirits. Sin made itself felt anew by his timid conscience, and then to the joy of salvation there succeeded all his former despair. O my sin! my sin! my sin! exclaimed the young monk one day in presence of the vicar-general, and in a tone of the most intense sorrow. “What!” replied the latter, “would you be but the painted image of a sinner, and have likewise but the painted image of a Saviour?” Then added Staupitz in a tone of authority: “Know that Jesus Christ is Saviour even of those who are great and real sinners, and who deserve utter condemnation.”

What agitated Luther was not only the sin that he found in his heart, for to his troubles of conscience were added such as perplexed his understanding. If the holy precepts of the Bible inspired him with dread, one or other of that divine book’s doctrines added to his torment. The truth, though employed by God as the grand means of giving peace to a sinner, necessarily commences by depriving him of that fallacious security which is his destruction. The doctrine of election, in particular, perplexed the young man, and launched him into a field which it was difficult for him to traverse. Was he to believe that it was

¹ Ecce jucundissimum ludum, verba undique mihi colludeant, planeque huic sententiæ aridebant et assultabant. (L. Epp. i. 115.)

² Nunc nihil dulcius aut gratius mihi sonet quam pœnitentiæ, etc. (Ibid.)

³ Ita enim dulcescent precepta Dei, quando non in libris tantum, sed in vulneribus dulcissimi Salvatoris legenda intelligimus. (Ibid.)

man who should first choose God for his portion? or if it were God who should first choose man? The Bible history, daily experience, the writings of St. Augustine, all showed him that, always and in everything, we must ascend at last to the sovereign will by which all things exist, and on which they all depend. But his ardent mind would fain have gone farther still. He could have wished to scan the secret counsel of God, to unveil its mysteries, to view the invisible, and to comprehend the incomprehensible. Staupitz stopped him. He urged him not to pretend to sound the hidden Godhead, but to keep to what of it is manifested to us in Christ. "Behold the wounds of Christ," said he to him, "and there thou shalt see God's counsel towards man clearly shining forth. We cannot comprehend God out of Jesus Christ. In Christ thou shalt find what I am, and what I require, saith the Lord. You will find him no where else, whether in heaven or on earth."^{1 2}

The vicar-general did more than this. He made Luther recognise the fatherly design of God's providence in permitting the various temptations and conflicts which his soul had to sustain. These, he taught him to view in a light well calculated to re-animate his courage. It is by such trials that God prepares for himself the souls which he destines for some important work. The vessel must be proved before it is launched into the mighty ocean. If some education be necessary for every man, a particular education is required for those who have to act on their generation. This was what Staupitz represented to the monk of Erfurt. "It is not in vain," he told him, "that God

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xxii, p. 489.

² Here we have the true gospel of Christ stated by Staupitz, as Luther understood it, and had been instructed in it by God himself. It engrossed his whole soul, and was gradually made clearer and clearer to him. We perceive it in all those disclosures of his inmost feelings, quoted, so much to the purpose, in various parts of the worthy author's account of Luther's adaptation and preparation for the great work to which he was called; as, for example, when here, and a little before, he introduces what Luther says of *repentance*, and afterwards of the *righteousness of God*, expressions than which none had been more bitter or hateful to him hitherto; but which, afterwards, when he came to know their true meaning in Christ, sounded most sweetly in his ears. Yes, this is the true spirit of the gospel: and it is the true spirit of the Reformation also; not Luther's only, but as originally professed in our own, so-called Reformed Church. Would not many, who withal zealously affect orthodoxy, cover these views again as with a veil, so that the words *repentance*, *God's righteousness*, and such like, are anew employed rather to the oppression than the relief of the mind; and this even thought necessary in order that men may not be careless and at their ease.—I. R.

exercises thee by so many conflicts: thou wilt see that He will make use of thee as his minister in great affairs."

These words, heard by Luther with mingled astonishment and humility, filled him with courage, and gave him the consciousness of a moral energy which he had not even suspected that he possessed. The wisdom and the prudence of an enlightened friend reveal, by degrees, the strong man to himself. Nor does Staupitz rest at this point. He gives him precious directions for his studies, and exhorts him from thenceforth to throw aside the scholastic systems, and to find all his theology in the Bible. "Let the study of the Scriptures," said he, "be your favourite occupation." And never was the best counsel better followed. But what more than all gladdened Luther, was the present of a Bible made to him by Staupitz. At length he himself possessed the treasure which up to that hour he had been obliged to look for, either in the university library, or at the chain of the monastery, or in the cell of a friend. Forthwith he studied the Scriptures, and especially St. Paul's epistles, with an ever-growing zeal. To the study of the Bible he now united no other but that of St. Augustine. All that he reads now comes powerfully home to his soul. Conflicts have prepared his heart to understand the Word. The incorruptible seed powerfully penetrates the soil into which the ploughshare has been deeply driven. When Staupitz quitted Erfurt, a new day had dawned upon Luther.

Nevertheless, the work was not yet complete. The vicar-general began it, but God had reserved its completion for a humbler instrument. The conscience of the young Augustinian had not yet found repose, and his body began, at length, to sink under efforts which kept his soul at its utmost stretch. He was attacked by a grievous illness which brought him to the gates of death. It was now the second year of his abode in the monastery. All his anguish and his terrors returned on the approach of death; his own defilement, and the holiness of God, troubled his soul anew; when one day, as he was well nigh overwhelmed with despair,¹ an old monk entered his cell, and addressed to

¹ Thus was Luther exercised and prepared by much anguish of soul for relishing, and knowing how to teach, the true consolation of the gospel. It were, however, a false view, did we thence infer that whoever is to enjoy that

him some words of comfort. Luther opened his heart to him, and told him the fears by which his rest was taken from him. The worthy old man had not the capacity to follow that soul through all its doubts, as Staupitz had done; but he knew his *Credo*, and there he had found wherewithal to solace his heart. He thought, then, that he would apply the same cure to this young friar. Taking him back to that symbol of the apostles which Luther had learned in his early childhood, the old monk in a kind tone pronounced the article, *I believe in the forgiveness of sins*. These simple words, which the pious friar candidly recited, at that decisive moment, shed great comfort over Luther's soul. "I believe," he soon repeated to himself on his bed of suffering, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins!" "Ah!" says the monk, "we must not only believe that the sins of David or Peter are forgiven: for that is no more than the devils believe. God's command is, that we should believe that our own are forgiven."¹ How sweet did this command appear to poor Luther! "See what St. Bernard says in his discourse on the annunciation," added the old friar, "the testimony given by the Holy Ghost in thy heart is this: 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.'"

From that moment light broke upon the heart of the young monk of Erfurt. The word of grace had been spoken, and he has believed it. He renounces meriting salvation, and gives himself up with confidence to the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Not, that in admitting this principle, he apprehended its consequences; he remained sincerely attached to the Church, although he had no more need of her; for having received salvation imme-

consolation must pass through the same process; still worse were it to view this as communicating to the soul a certain worthiness, or right, to obtain that consolation, or as it were a condition ordained by God for obtaining it. This latter notion is quite subversive of the gospel, and is exactly what it was requisite that Luther should utterly banish. Alas! has it not regained too much ground in the very church that Luther reformed? The bare idea, too, of its being required as a preparative for the consolations of the gospel, without which these cannot be rightly enjoyed, obscures the true gospel. By that course, Luther was led just to renounce all those things in which he had been seeking for peace, and to perceive how vain they all were. Happy the mind of him for whom so severe a training is not required, and who, at once, with a believing confidence, takes to himself the consolation which God freely and unconditionally bestows. Such a Christian shows that he has best understood Luther, and is penetrated with the true spirit of the doctrine which he reformed—the doctrine of the genuine gospel.—L. R.

¹ Davidi aut Petro . . . Sed mandatum Dei esse, ut singuli homines nobis remitti peccata credamus. (Melancht. Vita. L.)

diately from God, Roman Catholicism was virtually destroyed in him. But he goes on and searches the writings of the apostles and prophets, for all that can strengthen the hope that now fills his heart. He daily seeks aid from on high, and daily, too, the light brightens in his soul.

Recovered health of mind brought with it the recovery of his bodily health, and he speedily rose from his sick-bed. He had received a new life in a double sense. The festival of Christmas which came on soon after, enabled him to taste in abundance all the consolations of faith. He participated in the solemnities of that season with delightful feelings; and when, amidst the pomps of Christmas day, he had to sing these words: *O beata culpa quæ talem meruisti Redemptorem*; ¹ his whole man said *Amen*, and leapt for joy.

Luther had now been two years in the monastery, and the time was come for his being ordained a priest. He had received much, and he joyfully surveyed the prospect which the priesthood presented to him, of freely giving what he had freely received. He wished to take the advantage of the ceremony of consecration, as a means of being fully restored to his father's affections, and accordingly he invited him to be present and even asked him to fix the day. John Luther, never yet fully reconciled to his son, accepted this invitation notwithstanding, and appointed Sunday, May 2d. 1507, as the day.

Among Luther's friends was the vicar of Isenac, John Braun, who had been a faithful adviser to him during his stay there. Luther wrote to him on the 22d. of April, and this letter is the oldest that remains to us of the Reformer's writing. It has the following address: "To John Braun, holy and venerable priest of Christ, and of Mary." The name of Mary occurs in the two first of Luther's letters only.

"God who is glorious and holy in all his works," says the candidate for priest's orders, "having deigned to give me a magnificent education; me, a wretched and in every way worthless sinner, and to call me by his sole and most bountiful mercy, to his sublime ministry, I ought, in testimony of my gratitude for so magnificent, and so divine a bounty (in so far as dust can do

¹ O happy fault which has deserved such a Redeemer! (Mathesius p. 5.)

this), to discharge with my whole heart the office entrusted to me.

"Therefore it is, most dear father, lord, and brother, that I would request, should time, and your church and family affairs admit of it, that you will condescend to aid me with your presence and your prayers, to the end that my sacrifice may, in God's sight, be acceptable.

"But I must tell you, that you must come directly to our monastery, and stay there with us for a time, without going about the streets to look for any other hostelry. You must become an inhabitant of our cells."

The day at last arrived. The miner of Mansfeld did not fail to be present at the consecration of his son; nay, he even gave him a mark of his affection and generosity which was not to be mistaken, by presenting him on this occasion with a gift of twenty florins.

The ceremony took place, Jerome, bishop of Brandenburg, officiating. In conferring on Luther the power of celebrating mass, he put a chalice into his hand, and uttered these solemn words: "*Accipe potestatem sacrificandi pro vivis and mortuis.* Receive power to sacrifice for the living and for the dead." Luther calmly listened at the time to these words, conferring upon him the power of doing the very work of the Son of God; but at a later period, they made him shudder. "If the earth," said he, "did not then swallow us both up, it could only be ascribed to the great patience and long suffering of the Lord." ¹

Thereafter, the father joined his son at dinner in the monastery, with other friends of the young priest, and with the monks. The conversation fell on Luther's entering that establishment. The friars applauded his having done so, as a most meritorious act. Hearing this, the inflexible John, turning to his son, said to him: "Hast thou not read in Scripture that a man ought to obey his father and his mother?" These words struck Luther: they presented the act which had introduced him to the monastery, in quite a new light, and made a lasting impression on his heart.

Following an advice given him by Staupitz, Luther, after his

¹ L. Opp. xvi. (W.) 1144.

ordination, made short excursions on foot among the parishes and monasteries of the neighbourhood, with the view both of enjoying mental relaxation and giving his body its necessary exercise, and of practise in preaching.

The feast called God's festival, was about to be celebrated with great pomp at Eisleben.¹ The vicar-general behoved to be there. Luther failed not to attend; he still stood in need of Staupitz, and sought all opportunities of meeting with that enlightened adviser, who was now guiding his soul into the paths of life. In the procession, which was numerous and brilliant, Staupitz himself carried the host; Luther followed in his priest's robes, and so much did the idea all at once strike his imagination and alarm him, of Jesus Christ himself being borne by the vicar-general, and our Lord's being presented in person before him, that he could hardly move forward; the sweat fell from him in drops; he staggered and thought he must die with distress and terror. The procession came, at last, to a close. The host which had thus awakened all the monk's alarms, was solemnly deposited in the sanctuary, and Luther, finding himself alone with Staupitz, threw himself into his arms and confessed how much he had been afraid. On this the good vicar-general, who had long known that kind Saviour who doth not break the bruised reed, mildly said to him; "It was not Jesus Christ, my brother; Jesus Christ does not frighten; he only comforts." ²

Luther was not doomed to remain hid in one obscure monastery, and the time was now come for his being transferred to a wider theatre. Staupitz, with whom he lived in uninterrupted correspondence, was well aware that the young monk possessed too stirring a soul, to be long shut up within so narrow a sphere. He spoke of him to Frederick, elector of Saxony; and in 1508, probably towards the close of the year, that enlightened prince called Luther to be a professor in the university of Wittemberg. Wittemberg was a field on which he had many a hard battle to fight; but Luther felt that there it was his vocation to be. He was asked to betake himself speedily to his new post, and

¹ Ei, hast du nicht auch gehört das man Eltern soll gehorsam seyn (L. Epp. ii. 101.)

² Es ist nicht Christus, denn Christus schreckt nicht, sondern tröstet nur. (L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 513. and 724.)

answered this appeal without delay; hurrying off with such precipitation as not even to write to the man whom he used to call his much beloved master and father, John Braun, parish priest of Isenac. Some months after, he did write to him, saying: "So sudden was my departure that the very people I lived with, hardly knew of it. I am gone to a distance, I admit, but the better part of me remains near thee."¹ Luther had spent three years in the monastery at Erfurt.

V. On arriving at Wittenberg, Luther repaired to the monastery of the Augustinians, where he had a cell allotted to him; for although a professor, he ceased not to be a monk. He was called to teach physics and logic, an arrangement in which regard was doubtless had to the philosophical studies he had pursued at Erfurt, and the degree he had obtained of master of arts. Thus did he find himself, while hungering and thirsting for the Word of God, compelled to attend, almost exclusively, to the study of Aristotle's scholastic philosophy. He needed the bread of life which God gives to the world, yet was obliged to occupy himself with human subtleties. What a constraint this, and how must it have afflicted him! "I am well, by the grace of God," writes he to John Braun, "were it not that I have to devote my whole energies to the study of philosophy. I have greatly desired, ever since my coming to Wittenberg, to exchange this branch for that of theology, but," adds he, that it might not be supposed that he meant the theology of that time, "the theology I mean, is that which looks for the kernel of the nut, the marrow of the wheat, and the marrow of the bones."² Be it as it may, God is good," he goes on to say with the confidence which was his life's very soul, "man is almost always deceived in the judgments he pronounces; but he is our God. He will kindly conduct us evermore." The labours in which Luther had then to engage, were of the utmost service to him afterwards, when he had to combat the errors of the schoolmen.³

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 5. (17th March, 1509.)

² *Theologia quæ nucleum nucis et medullam tritici et medullam ossium scrutatur.* (L. Epp. i. 6.)

³ While here, and in what follows, we observe how Luther was gradually prepared by God, and constrained, as it were, at every turn, involuntarily to undertake the enterprize that he accomplished; what shall we say of those spiteful and little-minded slanderers who impute what he did to dishonourable motives; alleging that it was an achievement in which he had sought to be engaged, for the

It was impossible that he could keep to this; his heart's desire behoved to be fulfilled. That same power which, some years before, had driven Luther from the bar to the monastic life, now drove him from philosophy to the Bible. He zealously applied himself to the study of the ancient tongues, chiefly Greek and Hebrew, that thus he might derive learning and divinity from their proper sources; and in such labours, his mental and physical constitution enabled him to be indefatigable.¹ Some months after arriving at the university, he applied for the degree of bachelor in theology, and obtained it about the end of March, 1509, with the particular vocation of devoting himself to biblical theology, *ad Biblia*.

And now every day at one o'clock, Luther had to speak upon the Bible; precious hour alike for the professor and the disciples, and one that enabled them to enter, ever more and more deeply, into the divine sense of those revelations, so long lost both to the learned and the common people.

He began his lectures with an explanation of the psalms, and passed from that to the epistle to the Romans; to his meditations on which, he was chiefly indebted for the light of truth that broke upon his heart. In the retirement of his quiet cell, with the epistle of St. Paul open before him, he devoted hours of study to the divine Word. Having one day come to the 17th verse of the first chapter, he there read the passage of the prophet Habakkuk: *The just shall live by faith*. He was struck with these words. For the just, then, there is a different life from that of the rest of men, and this life is bestowed by faith. This word which he received into his heart as if God had deposited it there, unveiled to him the mystery of the Christian life, and gave farther growth to that life in himself. Long after, amid his many labours, he would think that he still heard a voice saying to him: "The just shall live by faith."²

sake of worldly fame, or to satisfy the cravings of ambition or of envy? They can have no eyes to see, or heart to comprehend, or they must be totally unacquainted with the true state of the case. Hence the work of M. Merle is admirably fitted to place it before us in its true light. It makes us thoroughly acquainted with the man as he really was, and with the work of the Reformation, to which he was destined, and for which he was prepared, by God himself. No amendment can be looked for in the man who is not convinced of this. We must leave him to indulge his malice, as a hopeless slanderer of the truth. L. R. See, Dr. M'Laine's note in refutation of Hume. M'Laine's Mosheim, vol. iv. p. 31. Also, Milner's Hist. of the Church of Christ, vol. iv. p. 321. Tr.

¹ In studiis litterarum corpore ac mente indefessus. (Pallavicini Hist. Conc. Trid. I. 16.)

² Seckend, p. 55.

Luther's lectures, thus prepared, were little like any thing that had been heard up to that time. It was no fine-worded rhetorician, or pedantic schoolman, that now spoke; it was a Christian who had experienced the power of divine truths, who drew them from the Bible, brought them forth again from the treasury of his own heart, and presented them, all full of life, to his astonished auditors. It was not man's teaching; it was the teaching of God.

This altogether novel exposition of the truth made a noise; the news of it spread far and wide, and attracted a crowd of young foreign students to the recently founded university. Several even of the professors attended Luther's lectures; among others the famous Martin Pollich, of Mellerstadt, doctor of medicine, law, and philosophy, who together with Staupitz, had organised the university of Wittemberg, and was its first rector. Mellerstadt, often called the *light of the world*, had the modesty to take his place among the disciples of the new professor. "This monk," said he, "will put to rout all the doctors; he will introduce a new doctrine, and reform the whole Church; for he takes his post on the Word of Christ, and no man can impugn or overthrow that Word, even were he to attack it with all the arms of philosophy, of the sophists, the Scotists, Albertists, the Thomists,¹ and with all the Tartarus!"²

Staupitz who was the hand employed by providence to draw forth the gifts and treasures that lay hid in Luther, now invited him to preach in the Church of the Augustinians. But the young professor recoiled from this proposal. He wished to confine himself to academical functions, and trembled to think of undertaking to preach also. Staupitz urged him in vain. "No, no," he replied, "it is no small matter to speak to men in the place of God."³ How touching is this humility in the great

¹ Melch. Adam. Vita Lutheri, p. 104.

² These were so many different adherents among the learned, of the three chief doctors of the thirteenth century, and who taught their doctrines. The Scotists were the followers of John Duns, Scotus, an English Franciscan friar who taught at Oxford and Paris; the Albertists of Albertus Magnus, a German Dominican, who after having studied at Padua, and been bishop of Regensburg, resigned his honours, in order that he might devote himself entirely to study, being regarded as the wonder of his age; and the Thomists of Thomas Aquinas, an Italian Dominican, one of Albert's pupils, and known as the greatest theologian and philosopher of his time. These though all great men for that age, had by their abstruse subtilties, done more to obscure than to explain the gospel.—L. R.

³ Fabricius centifol. Lutheri, p. 33.—Mathesius, p. 6.

reformer of the Church! Staupitz insisted. But the ingenious Luther, says one of his historians, found fifteen arguments, pretexts, and pretences to defend himself against this call. In the end, as the chief of the Augustinians continued his attack: "Ah, Mr. Doctor," said Luther, "in doing this you are killing me. I could not last three months at it."—"Agreed," said the vicar-general, "and be it so in God's name! For our Lord God has need of devoted and humble men in the upper world also." Luther had at last to yield.

In the middle of Wittemberg market-place there stood an old wooden chapel, thirty feet long by twenty broad, with its partitions propped on all sides, and ready to fall to ruins. An old pulpit, made of boards and three feet high, received the preacher, and in this wretched chapel began the preaching of the Reformation. God desired that what was to re-establish his glory should have the most lowly beginnings. The foundations of the Church of the Augustinians had just been laid, and in the meantime, while waiting for its being finished, this paltry place of worship was used. "That building," adds the contemporary of Luther who relates these circumstances,¹ "might well be compared to the stable in which Christ was born. It was in that miserable enclosure that God desired, so to speak, that his beloved Son should be born for a second time. Among the thousands of cathedrals and parish churches that crowd the world, God chose not one for the preaching of everlasting life."

Luther preached, and all were struck with the new preacher; his hearers were captivated with his expressive face, noble air, and clear and sonorous voice. Before his time, most preachers had sought rather for what might amuse their auditors, than for what might convert them. But the deep seriousness that predominated in Luther's sermons, the joy wherewith his knowledge of the gospel had filled his heart, gave to his eloquence an authority, a fervour, and an unction, which not one of his predecessors had possessed. "Endued with a mind remarkable for promptness and vivacity," says one of his adversaries,² "of a strong memory, and singularly happy in the use he made of his mother tongue, Luther yielded to no one of his age in eloquence. Discoursing from the elevation of the pulpit, like a man under

¹ Myconius.

² Florimond Raymond. Hist. heres. cap. 5.

the influence of some strong passion, he suited his action to his words, struck the minds of his hearers in the most extraordinary manner, and hurried them like a torrent, whithersoever he would. So much force, grace, and eloquence, are seldom found among the northern nations." "He had an eloquence," says Bossuet, "full of life and impetuosity, which drew along with it and ravished the people."¹

Soon the little chapel was found too small to contain the hearers that pressed into it in crowds. Upon this, the town-council of Wittemberg, chose Luther as their preacher, and invited him to preach in the town church. He made a still greater impression there. The force of his genius, the eloquence of his diction, and the excellence of the doctrines he announced, alike astonished his auditors. His fame became widely diffused, and Frederick the Wise himself, on one occasion, came to Wittemberg to hear him.

A new era now commenced for Luther. His unprofitable life in the monastery was succeeded by great activity. The freedom, the labour, the energetic and uninterrupted exertions to which he could devote himself at Wittemberg, completed the re-establishment of harmony and peace in his soul. He was now at his post, and the work of God was soon about to develope its majestic march.

VI. Luther was now giving instructions both in the academical hall and in the church, when his labours met with the following interruption. In 1510, according to some not until 1511 or 1512, he was sent to Rome, in consequence of a disagreement having arisen on some points, between seven monasteries of his order and the vicar-general,² and Luther's mental vivacity, his power of expressing himself, and his talents for discussion, having led these seven monasteries to select him as agent in conducting their case before the Pope.³ This divine dispensation was necessary to Luther. It was of consequence that he should know Rome, for monastic prejudices and illusions still influenced him, so much as to make him regard it as the head quarters of holiness.

¹ Hist. des variat. book i.

² Quod septem conventus a vicario in quibusdam dissentirent. (Cochlæus. 2.)

³ Quod esset acer ingenio et ad contradicendum audax et vehemens. (Ibid.)

Commencing his journey, Luther crossed the Alps, but hardly had he descended into the plains of rich and voluptuous Italy, than he found, at every step, new subjects of astonishment and of scandal. The poor German monk was received by a rich monastery of Benedictines, situate on the Po, in Lombardy. The rent-roll of this religious house amounted to thirty-six thousand ducats; whereof twelve thousand were spent on eating and drinking, another twelve thousand on buildings, and the remaining twelve thousand on the other needs of the monks.¹ The richly furnished rooms, beautiful dresses, and exquisite viands, all confounded Luther. Marble, silk, luxury in all its forms; what a new spectacle to the humble friar of the poor monastery of Wittemberg! He was astonished, but held his peace; however, when Friday came, what was his surprise, for the table of the Benedictines continued to be covered with abundance of animal food! On this he resolved to speak out.

“The Church,” said he to them, “and the Pope forbid such things.” The Benedictines were indignant at being thus reprimanded by a coarse German. But Luther having insisted, and having threatened them, perhaps, that he would make their disorders known, some thought that the simplest plan would be to make away with their troublesome guest. The porter of the monastery warned him that he ran some risk in staying longer where he was. Accordingly, taking the hint, he escaped from this Epicurean monastery and arrived at Bologna, where he fell dangerously ill.² Some have considered this illness as the result of an attempt at poisoning; but, it is more natural to suppose that change of diet had affected the frugal monk of Wittemberg, who had been accustomed to live chiefly on herrings and bread. This illness was not to be unto death but for the glory of God. The low spirits and oppression to which he was naturally subject, now laid hold of him. To die thus far from Germany, under that burning sky, and in a foreign land—how sad a lot! The anguish he had endured at Erfurt was intensely revived. He was troubled with a sense of his sins, and terrified on looking forward to the divine judgment. But just as those terrors had reached their utmost pitch, the words of St. Paul that had struck him at Wittemberg: *The just shall live by faith*, forcibly presented themselves to his mind, and like a ray

¹ L. Opp. (W). XXII, p. 1468.

² Matth. Dresser, Hist. Lutheri.

from heaven, threw light into his soul. Refreshed and comforted, he soon recovered his health and resumed his journey to Rome; expecting to find there quite a different life from that of the Lombardy monasteries, and eager to efface by what he should behold of Roman sanctity, the mournful impression left on his mind by his visit to the banks of the Po.

At last, at the close of a disagreeable journey, performed beneath the scorching sky of Italy, about the beginning of summer, he drew near to the city placed on seven hills. His heart beat with emotion; his eyes eagerly looked out for the queen of the world and of the Church. No sooner did he descry, at a distance, the eternal city, the residence of St. Peter and St. Paul, the metropolis of catholicity, than he threw himself on the ground and exclaimed: "Holy Rome, I salute thee!"

We now find Luther in Rome. The Wittemberg professor stands amid the eloquent ruins of consular and imperial Rome, the Rome of the confessors of Jesus Christ and of the martyrs. There once lived that Plautus and that Virgil, whose works he had taken with him into the monastery, together with all those great men whose history had often made his heart throb with interest. He finds their statues and the ruins of monuments that attest their glory. But all this glory, all this might, had passed away: and he trode the dust of it under his feet. Every step recalls the melancholy presentiment of Scipio, as he wept on beholding the ruins of Carthage, its burnt down palaces and demolished walls, and exclaimed: "Thus shall it be with Rome!" "And in fact," said Luther, "The Rome of the Scipios and the Cæsars has been changed into a carcase. Such is the mass of ruins that the foundations of the houses at this day, rest where the roofs formerly were." "And there," he adds casting a sorrowful look over these ruins, "there were piled up the wealth and the treasures of the world!"¹ All these heaps of rubbish, over which he stumbles at every step, proclaim to Luther, within the very walls of Rome, that what is most mighty in the eyes of man, may be destroyed with the utmost ease by the breath of the Lord.

But with the ashes of the profane were mingled the ashes of saints, and of this he is not forgetful. The burying place of the martyrs does not lie far from that of the Roman generals and

¹ L. Opp. (W.) XXII, p. 2374 and 2377.

conquerors, and we may well believe that the sorrows of Christian Rome affected the heart of the Saxon monk, more powerfully than did pagan Rome with all her glory. Here it was that the letter came, in which St. Paul wrote: *The just is justified by faith.* He is not far from Appii Forum and the Three Taverns. There stood the house of Narcissus, here was Cæsar's palace, where the Lord delivered the apostle from the jaws of the lion. How many memorials were there, to fortify the heart of the monk of Wittemberg!

Rome at that time presented quite a different aspect. The papal see was then filled by Julius II., not by Leo X., as has been said, no doubt from inattention, by some eminent German historians. Luther often related the following anecdote of this Pope. When informed of his armies being defeated by the French before Ravenna, he was engaged in repeating his hours: on hearing the news, he threw down the book, and said with a horrible oath. "Well now! so thou art become French. Is it thus that thou dost protect thy Church?" Then turning himself in the direction of the country, to the arms of which he thought of applying for succour: "Holy Switzer¹ pray for us," he added. The spectacle presented by that wretched city, formed a medley of ignorance, frivolity, and dissoluteness; a profane spirit, contempt of every thing sacred, and a disgraceful traffic in holy things, were every where perceptible; notwithstanding all which, the pious monk remained for some time influenced by its spell.

When the feast of St. John came round, he heard the Romans about him repeating a proverb which had spread among the common people. "Happy," it was said, "is the mother whose son says a mass on St. John's eve." "Oh," said Luther to himself, "how much do I wish I could make my mother happy;" and, accordingly, this pious son of Margaret, wanted to say a mass on that day, but was prevented by the pressure of the crowd.²

At once fervent and meek, he made the circuit of all the churches and chapels; he believed all the lying tales that were told there; he devoutly acquitted himself of all the religious

¹ Sancte Swizere! ora pro nobis. (L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1314. and 1332.

² L. Opp. (W.) Dedication of the 117. psalm. VIth. Vol. L. g.

practices that were there required of him; and was delighted at being able to do so many pious acts which his countrymen had no opportunity of performing. "Ah how much do I regret," the pious German would say to himself, "that my father and mother are still alive! How delighted should I be to deliver them from the fires of purgatory, by my masses, my prayers, and so many other admirably good deeds."¹ He had found the light; but darkness was still far from being quite expelled from his understanding. His heart was converted; still his mind was not yet enlightened; he had faith and love, but he was wanting in knowledge. It was no small matter to come out altogether from that thick darkness which for so many ages had covered the earth.²

Luther repeatedly said mass at Rome, and did it with all the dignity and unction that such an action seemed to require. But what was the sorrow that seized the heart of the Saxon monk, on beholding the sadly profane and mechanical devotion of the Roman priests, while celebrating the sacrament of the altar. One day when he happened to be officiating, seven masses had been read at an adjacent altar before he had read one. "Get on, get on," cried one of the priests, "and let our Lady soon have her Son again," thus impiously alluding to the transubstantiation of bread into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. On another occasion, Luther was only at the gospel when the priest next to him had already finished his mass. "Passa, passa!" cried the latter, "haste you, haste, now do be done with it!"³

Still greater was his astonishment at finding in the dignitaries of the popedom, what he had observed in the common priests. He had hoped better things of the former.

It was the fashion of the papal court to attack Christianity, and no man could pass for a well bred person who did not hold some wrong, or heretical notion on the doctrines of the Church. An attempt had been made to prove to Erasmus, by passages

¹ L. Opp. (W.) Dedication of the 117. psalm. VI. Vol. L. g.

² Here, too, we see how all went on gradually and without Luther's seeking. It was God's work; not his. L. R.

³ L. Opp. (W.) xix. von der Winkelmesse, Mathesius, 6.

⁴ In quel tempo non pareva fosse galantuomo e buon cortegiano colui che dogmi della chiesa non aveva qualche opinione erronea ed heretica. (Carraciola, Vit. msc. Paul. IV., quoted by Ranke.

from Pliny, that there is no difference betwixt the souls of men and beasts;¹ and some of the pope's young courtiers, pretended that the orthodox faith was the produce of the astute inventions of certain Saints.²

His quality of envoy from the Augustine monks of Germany, brought Luther many invitations to meetings of distinguished ecclesiastics. One day, in particular, he found himself seated at table with several prelates, when these ingenuously shewed themselves off to him in their true character, as men of ribald manners and impious conversation; not scrupling to pass a thousand jokes in his presence; and they, no doubt, judged him to be such an one as themselves. Among other ludicrous stories which they told in the monk's hearing, they related with laughter and gloriation, how in saying mass, at the altar, instead of the sacramental words which were to transubstantiate the bread and the wine into the Saviour's body and blood, they pronounced over the bread and wine, the following words in derision: *Panis es et panismanebis, vinum es et vinum manebis*, (bread thou art, and bread thou shalt remain; wine thou art, and wine thou shalt remain). Then, continued they, we raise the ostensory and all the people worship. Luther on hearing this could hardly believe his ears. Notwithstanding the remarkable vivacity, and even gaiety he shewed in the company of his friends, his mind was full of seriousness when sacred things were in question. He was shocked at the pleasantries of Rome. "I was a grave and pious young monk," says he, "and words like these gave me much pain. If at Rome, people talk at table thus freely and publicly, thought I to myself, what if their actions correspond to their words; and if all, pope, cardinals, and courtiers, say mass thus! And I who have heard them read devoutly so very many, how they must have deceived me!"³

Luther mingled much with the monks and the citizens of Rome; among whom, some might cry up the pope and his party, the greater number gave free vent to their complaints and sarcasms, what had they not to relate of the pope then reigning, of Alexander VI., and of so many others! His Roman friends told him one day how Cæsar Borgia, after having fled from Rome, was

¹ Burigny's life of Erasmus, i. 139.

² E medio Romanæ curiæ, sectam juvenum. . . qui asserebant nostram fidem orthodoxam potius quibusdam sanctorum astutiis subsistere (Paul Canensius. Vita Pauli. II.)

³ L. Opp. (W.) xix. von der Winkelmesse.

taken prisoner in Spain; that when about to be brought to trial, he cried for mercy while in prison, and asked for a confessor. A monk was sent to him. This monk he murdered, disguised himself under his hood, and escaped. "This have I heard in Rome for certain,"¹ says Luther. Another day, as he happened to be passing along the great street that leads to St. Peter's church, he stop't in amazement before a statue in stone, representing a pope in the form of a woman, holding a sceptre in her hand, attired in the papal mantle, and with an infant in her arms. It is a girl from Maintz, he is told, whom the cardinals elected pope, and who was brought to bed of a child at this spot. Accordingly never does a pope pass along this street. "I am amazed," says Luther, "that the popes should tolerate such a statue."²

Luther had expected to find the edifice of the Church encircled with might and splendour; but he found her doors driven in and her walls consumed with fire. He looked round on the desolations of the sanctuary, and recoiled with horror from the sight. He had dreamed of nothing but holiness, and discovered nothing but profanation.

Nor was he less struck with the disorders that prevailed outside the churches. "The police of Rome," he used to say, "is harsh and severe. The magistrate, or captain, traverses the city every night on horse-back, with a train of three hundred servitors; he stops all persons whom he meets in the streets, and should he find an armed man there, he hangs him or throws him into the Tiber. And yet the city is full of disorders and murders; whereas, wherever the Word of God is purely and honestly preached, order and peace are found to reign, without any need for the law and its rigours."³—"It is not to be believed how many sins and infamous actions are committed in Rome," he says farther; "one must see and hear, if he would believe this." He was wont to say likewise; "If there be a hell, Rome is built over above it; it is an abyss whence all sins proceed."⁴

Even at that time, Luther's mind was deeply impressed with

¹ Das habe Ich zu Rome für gewiss gehört. (L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1322.,

² Es nimmt mich Wunder dass die Pabste solches Bild leiden können. (Ibid p. 1320.)

³ L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 2376.

⁴ Ist irgend eine Hölle, so muss Rome darauf gebaut seyn. (Ibid p. 2377.)

what he saw, and at a later period the impression became still stronger. "The nearer one gets to Rome, the more bad Christians does he find," said he, many years afterwards. "It is commonly said, that he who goes to Rome, for the first time, seeks for a knave; that the second time he finds him; and that the third time, he takes him with him, at the moment of his leaving the place. But people have become so clever now, that all three journeys are made in one."¹ One of the most sadly celebrated, but one too, of the most profound geniuses of Italy, Machiavel, who was living at Florence when Luther passed through that city, on his way to Rome, makes the same remark: "The greatest symptom," said he, "of the approaching ruin of Christianity (meaning thereby Roman Catholicism) is, that the nearer the nations are to the capital of Christendom, the less do we find in them of a Christian spirit. The scandalous examples and the crimes of the court of Rome, are the cause of Italy having lost all principles of piety and all religious feelings." "We Italians," this great historian goes on to say, "have chiefly to thank the Church and the priests, for having become impious persons and cut-throats."² Luther, at a later date, could fully appreciate the advantages of this journey: "Not for an hundred thousand florins," he would say, "would I have missed seeing Rome."³

In relation to learning, also, this journey proved of the greatest advantage to him. Like Reuchlin, he contrived to make his stay in Italy subservient to his obtaining a deeper insight into holy Scripture; taking lessons in Hebrew, from a celebrated Rabbin, called Elias Levita, and acquiring in part at Rome his knowledge of that divine Word, under whose blows Rome was destined to fall.⁴

But it was chiefly in another respect, that this journey to Rome was of great importance to Luther. Not only was the veil withdrawn so as to reveal to the future reformer the sneering laugh, and the ribald infidelity that lay concealed behind the Roman superstitions; but, more than this, the living faith which God had implanted in him, was then mightily strengthened.

¹ Address to the christian nobility of the German nation.

² Dissertation on the first Decad of Livy.

³ 100,000 Gulden. (L. Opp. (W.) xxii, p. 2374.)

⁴ Even the blind, but not the willfully blind, may recognise in this journey of Luther to Rome, the superintendence of God in forming, and fitting him for the grand work of the Reformation.—L. R.

We have seen how he gave himself up at first to all the vain practices which the Church had established, as the price to be paid for the expiation of sins. Now, it happened that one day among others, he wanted to gain an indulgence which had been promised by the Pope, to whoever should go up what is called Pilate's stair-case, on his knees; and the poor Saxon monk was meekly crawling up the steps which he was told had been transported from Jerusalem to Rome by a miracle. But while acquitting himself of this meritorious act, he thought that he heard a voice loud as thunder, which cried to his inmost soul, as at Wittenberg and Bologna: *the just shall live by faith!* These words, which had already twice come upon him, as if spoken by an angel of God, resounded incessantly and powerfully within him. He rose, in great alarm, from the steps up which he had been dragging his body; he was horrified at himself, and mortified to see to what a pitch superstition had degraded him. He then fled to a distance from the scene of his folly.¹

That strong expression had a mysterious influence on the life of Luther. It was a creative word in regard both to the reformer and the Reformation. By it God then said: "Let there be light and there was light."

It often happens that before a truth can produce the effect which it ought to have on our minds, it must be repeatedly pressed upon us. Luther had bestowed much study on the Epistle to the Romans, yet never had he seen justification by faith, as taught there, in so clear a light. Now it is that he comprehends that righteousness which alone can stand before God; now it is, that he receives for himself from the hand of Christ, that obedience which God gratuitously imputes to the sinner, from the time that he humbly looks to the God-man crucified. Here we find the decisive epoch in the inward life of Luther. That faith which had delivered him from the terrors of death, becomes the soul of his theology, his fortress in all dangers, the weight of his words, the force of his charity, the foundation of his peace, the spur that urged him on in labour, his consolation in life and in death.

Now, this great doctrine of a salvation flowing from God, and

¹ Seckendorff, p. 56.

not from man, was not only the power of God in saving Luther's own soul; but it became likewise the power of God for the reformation of the Church. It was the effective weapon wielded by the apostles; a weapon too long neglected, but taken out at length, in all its original brightness, from the arsenal of the mighty God. The moment that Luther rose up at Rome, deeply affected and overwhelmed by the word which had been addressed by Paul to the inhabitants of that metropolis, fifteen centuries before, truth, which till then had lain sadly captive and bound in the Church, rose up too, never to fall any more.

Here we must mark his own words. "Holy and blameless as I might be, as a monk," said he, "my conscience, nevertheless, was full of trouble and anguish. I could not endure that expression, the righteousness of God. I had no love for that righteous and holy God who punishes sinners. I was secretly incensed against Him; I hated Him, inasmuch as, not content with bringing the law and the miseries of this life, to intimidate us poor creatures, when already lost by original sin, He still farther augmented our torment by the gospel. . . . But when, by the Spirit of God, I understood those words, when I learned how the justification of the sinner proceeds from the Lord's mere mercy through the medium of faith,¹ . . . then I felt myself born again, like a new man; then the gates were thrown open, and I entered into the very paradise of God.² From that time, too, I saw dear holy scripture with eyes altogether new. I went through the whole Bible, and collected a great many passages which taught me in what the work of God consisted. And whereas, before that, I most cordially hated that expression, righteousness of God, I began thenceforth to appreciate it, and to love it, as the sweetest and most consolatory. Truly, those words of Paul were to me the very gate of paradise."

When called, too, on solemn occasions to confess this doctrine, Luther's enthusiasm and rude energy never failed him. "I see," said he at an important moment,³ "that by the agency

¹ Quâ vos Deus misericors justificat per fidem. . . . (L. Opp. lat. in præf.)

² Hic me prorsus renatum esse sensi et apertis portis in ipsum paradisum intrasse. (Ibid.)

³ Gloss on the Imperial Edict, 1521. (L. Opp. (L) vol. xx.)

of his doctors, the devil is unceasing in his attacks on this fundamental article, and that with regard to it, he can neither cease nor take repose. Well then, I, doctor Martin Luther, unworthy evangelist of our Lord Jesus Christ, confess this article, *that faith alone justifies before God, without works*, and I declare that the emperor of the Romans, the emperor of the Turks, the emperor of the Tartars, the emperor of the Persians, the Pope, all the cardinals, the bishops, priests, monks, nuns, kings, princes, lords, all the world and all devils, ought to leave it standing, and allow it so to remain for ever. That if they will take in hand to impugn this truth, they will draw upon them the flames of hell. It is there that we find the true and holy gospel, and my declaration, that of me doctor Luther, according to the light of the Holy Ghost." . . . "No one," he continues, "has died for our sins, if it be not Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I say it once more, were the whole world, and all the devils, to rend each other, and to burst with rage, this is not the less true for all that. And if it be he alone who takes away our sins, it cannot be we, with our works. But good works follow redemption, as the fruit appears upon the tree. Such is our doctrine; it is that which the Holy Ghost, and with it, all holy Christendom, teach. We shall maintain it in the name of God. Amen."

Thus did Luther find what had been wanting, in a certain degree at least, to all the doctors and reformers, even the most illustrious. It was in Rome that God gave him this clear view of the fundamental doctrine of Christianity. He had come to the city of the pontiffs in search of the solution of certain difficulties respecting an order of monkhood, he took away with him, in his heart, the salvation of the Church.

VII. Luther left Rome and returned to Wittemberg, with a heart swelling with grief and indignation. Turning with disgust from the contemplation of the pontifical city, he looked with hope to the Holy Scriptures, and to that new life which the Word of God seemed to promise to the world. That Word gained in his heart all that the Church had lost there; and when, setting himself loose from the one, he turned towards the other, the whole Reformation was involved in that movement, for it placed God where the priest had been.

Staupitz, and the emperor, did not lose sight of the monk

whom they had called to the university of Wittenberg. It would appear that the vicar-general had a presentiment of the work which was about to be accomplished in the world; and that in the consciousness that it was too much for him to undertake, he wished to urge Luther to do so. Nothing is more remarkable, nothing perhaps more mysterious, than this personage, whom we find at every turn hurrying the monk into the course to which God was calling him, and who then goes himself and ruefully ends his days in a monastery. The young professor's preaching had made a deep impression on the prince; he admired the powers of his genius, his nervous eloquence, and the excellence of his matter.¹ The elector and his friend, wishing to promote a man who was the subject of such high hopes, resolved to make him take the elevated degree of doctor in theology. Staupitz went to the monastery, took Luther with him into the cloister garden; and there, while alone with him, under² a tree which Luther was fond of showing to his disciples, the venerable father said to him: "You must now, my friend, become a doctor of Holy Scripture." Luther shrank from the idea; it was an honour that frightened him. "Look about for some worthier person," he replied, "as for me, I cannot consent to it." The vicar-general insisted. "The Lord God has much to do in the Church; he now needs young and vigorous doctors." "This may have been said in raillery," adds Melancthon, "yet it was confirmed by the event; for many presages ordinarily precede great revolutions."³ It is not necessary to suppose that Melancthon here means miraculous prophecies. Even the most unbelieving age, such as that preceding our own, has seen this opinion verified; for how many presages, without there being any miracle, preceded the revolution that brought it to a close!

"But I am weak and sickly," replied Luther; "I have no long time to live. Look about for a strong man." "The Lord," replied the vicar-general, "has work to do in heaven as well as upon earth; dead or alive, God requires you to be in his council."⁴

¹ Vim ingenii, nervos orationis, ac rerum bonitatem expositarum in concionibus admiratus fuerat. (Melanct. Vita Luth.)

² Unter einem Baum, den er mir und andern gezeigt. (Math. 6.)

³ Multa precedunt mutationes præsagia. (Vita Lutheri.)

⁴ Ihr lebet nun oder sterbet, so darff euch Gott in seinem Rathe. (Mathes. 6.)

"None but the Holy Ghost can create a doctor in theology,"¹ exclaimed the monk, with ever-increasing alarm. "Do what your monastery calls on you to do," said Staupitz, "and what I myself, your vicar-general, command; for you have come under a promise to obey us." "But my poverty?" replied the friar, "for I have nothing out of which to pay the expenses which such a promotion involves." "You need not disquiet yourself about that," said his friend; "the prince has been so gracious as to charge himself with all the expenses." Thus pressed on every side, Luther thought himself obliged to yield.

It was towards the close of the summer, 1512, that Luther went to Leipzic to receive from the elector's treasurers, the money required for his promotion. According to what is common in courts, the money was not to be had. The friar grew impatient and wanted to go away, but was withheld by his vow of obedience. At length, on the fourth of October, he received from Pfeffinger and from John Doltzig, fifty florins; giving them a discharge for this sum, in which he assumes no higher quality than that of monk. "I Martin," says he, "friar of the Order of Hermits."² Luther lost no time in returning to Wittemberg.

Andrew Bodenstein, of the city of Carlstadt, was then Dean of the faculty of theology, and by the name of Carlstadt that doctor is chiefly known. He was, also, called the A, B, C; a name first given him by Melancthon, and suggested by the three initials of his name. Bodenstein acquired the first elements of literature in his native country. He was of a grave and demure character, apt perhaps to be jealous, and of a restless temper; but eagerly desirous of learning, and gifted with a large capacity. He went through several universities with a view of augmenting his knowledge, and studied theology even at Rome. On his return from Italy into Germany, he fixed himself at Wittemberg, and there became doctor of theology. "At this period," he says of himself, at a later date, "I had not yet read Holy Scripture;"³ a fact which gives us a most correct idea of the theology of that time. In addition to his functions

¹ *Neminem nisi Spiritum Sanctum creare posse doctorem theologiarum.* (Weismanni *Historia. Eccl. i. p. 1404.*)

² *L. Epp. i. p. 11.*

³ *Weismanni, Hist. Eccl. v. 1416.*

as professor he was a canon and arch-deacon. Such is the man who was afterwards to divide the Reformation. At that time he regarded Luther merely as an inferior; but the Augustinian friar soon became an object that excited his jealousy. "I do not wish to be less great than Luther,"¹ said he one day. Very far from then foreseeing the greatness to which the young professor was destined, Carlstadt conferred on his future rival the highest university dignity.

On the 18th of October, 1512, Luther was received licentiate in theology, and took this oath: "I swear that I will defend evangelical truth with all my power."² On the following day, Bodenstein, in the midst of a numerous assembly, invested him with the insignia of doctor of theology. He was made biblical doctor, and not doctor of sentences,³ and thus was called on to devote himself to the study of the Bible, and not to that of human traditions. He, then, as he tells us, swore fealty to his beloved holy Scripture.⁴ He engaged to preach it faithfully, to teach it purely, to study it during his whole life, and to defend it, by his disputations and writings, against all false doctors, so far as God should enable him.

This solemn oath was, for Luther, his call to be a reformer. By laying his conscience under the sacred obligation of freely investigating, and boldly announcing Christian truth, this oath raised the new doctor above the narrow limits within which he might have been confined by his monastic vow. Called by the university and by his sovereign, in the name of the imperial majesty and of the see of Rome itself, engaged in the sight of God by the most sacred oath, he was, thenceforth, the intrepid herald of the Word of life. On that memorable day, Luther was armed knight of the Bible.

We may add, that this oath of allegiance to Holy Scripture, may perhaps be regarded as one of the causes that led to the renovation of the Church. For the first and fundamental principle of the Reformation lay in the sole infallible authority of the Word of God; and all the reformations in detail, subse-

¹ Weismann, *Hist. Eccl.* p. 1416.

² *Juro me veritatem evangelicam viriliter defensurum.*

³ Doctor biblicus. *not* sententiarius. (Melancthon.)

⁴ *L. Opp.* (W.) xvi. p. 2061. (Mathesius. p. 7.)

quently effected in the doctrines, morals, and government of the Church, and in public worship, were but the following out of that first principle. It is hardly possible, at this day, to imagine the sensation that must have been produced by this elementary truth; a truth so simple, and yet for so many ages unknown. A few men only, of larger views than the common herd, foresaw its immense consequences. Soon did the bold voices of all the Reformers proclaim this mighty principle, the reverberation of which was to make Rome crumble into dust: "Let not Christians receive any doctrines but such as rest on the express words of Jesus Christ, of the apostles, and of the prophets. No man, no assembly of doctors, has any right to innovate upon these."

Luther's situation now underwent a change. The vocation he had received, was to the Reformer, like one of those extraordinary calls which the Lord addressed to the prophets under the old dispensation, and to the apostles under the new.¹ The solemn engagements which he had undertaken made so profound an impression on his soul, that the remembrance of that oath, in the sequel, sufficed to console him amid the utmost dangers, and the rudest struggles. Even when he beheld all Europe upheaved and shaken by the doctrine he had announced; when the accusations of Rome, the reproaches of many pious men, the doubts and alarms of his own heart, at all times so easily agitated, seemed likely to make him waver, lose heart, and sink into despair, he called to mind the oath he had sworn, and remained calm, steadfast, and full of joy. "I have gone forward in the name of the Lord," said he at a critical conjunc-

¹ We must correctly understand what is here said by the worthy author, that it may not be made a pretext for renewing the charge that we ascribe an *extraordinary* call to the Reformers. It might well be compared to the extraordinary call addressed to the prophets and apostles, in so far as respects the privilege and the duty of again bringing to light the truths of scripture when these were consigned to darkness, and vigorously maintaining them against the errors that had crept into their place. For this there was ample ground, looking to the solemn oath taken by Luther, and his right to interfere becomes the stronger as we observe how, in a legitimate way indeed, yet by God's special appointment, he was raised to the degree of doctor against his own wishes, called on that occasion to take the oath, and at the same time gifted with true light for understanding the Holy Scriptures. Truly it was God who called him in a special and impressive manner, and yet everything went on in its ordinary course, so that there was no need for his call being confirmed by miracles. Thus was it with all the reformers, as the sequel of their history will show. None engaged in the work without a call, yet none pretended to any, properly speaking, extraordinary call.—L. R.

ture, "and I have committed myself into his hands. His will be done! Who asked Him to create me a doctor? . . . If it be He who has created me one, let him sustain me! or if He repent of having done so, let Him supersede me! Hence this tribulation frightens me not. I seek but one thing, and that is, that I may continue to enjoy the Lord's favour in all that he calls on me to do, as a fellow-worker with Him." Another time he said: "He who undertakes any thing without a divine call, seeks his own glory. Now I, doctor Martin Luther, was constrained to become a doctor. The popedom would fain stop me in the discharge of my duty, but you see what has happened, and much worse will yet take place: they cannot defend themselves against me. I would, in God's name, march against lions, and tread under foot dragons and serpents. This will be begun in my life-time, and will be accomplished after my death."¹

From the hour in which he took his oath Luther no longer sought out the truth for his own sake only; he sought it for the sake of the Church. Still full of his recollections of Rome, he but dimly perceived a career lying before him, in which he promised to himself to advance with the whole energy of his soul. The spiritual life which hitherto had been manifesting itself within him, now began to extend itself without, so that this was the third period of his development. His entering the monastery had directed his thoughts towards God; his becoming acquainted with the remission of sins, and with the righteousness of faith, had set his soul at liberty; his oath as doctor had given him that baptism of fire by which he was to become the reformer of the Church.²

The first adversaries he attacked were those famous schoolmen whom he himself had so much studied, and who then reigned as lords paramount, in all the academies. He charged them with Pelagianism; and strenuously opposing Aristotle, the father of the school, and Thomas Aquinas, he undertook to cast both these from the throne from which they gave the law, the former in philosophy, and the latter in theology.³

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xxi. 2061.

² Here we find what was precisely the course of Luther's forming and fitting for his work, sketched and summed up in a few words.—L. R.

³ Aristotelem in philosophicis, Sanctum Thomam in theologicis, evertendos susceperat. (Pallavicini i. 16.)



He wrote to Lange that "Aristotle, Porphyry, the theologians of sentences (the schoolmen) are the barren studies of our ¹ age. I desire nothing more ardently than to unmask to many this play-actor who has duped the Church by putting on a Greek mask, and to show his ignominy to all."² In all public disputations he was heard to say: "the writings of the apostles and of the prophets, are more certain, and more sublime, than all the sophisms and all the theology of the school." Such words sounded strange at first, but people gradually became accustomed to them, and about a year later he could triumphantly say: "God is at work. Our theology and Saint Augustine succeed to admiration, and carry all before them at our university. Aristotle is losing ground; he is already tottering to his near and everlasting fall. The lectures on the sentences are admirably wearisome, and, indeed, no one can hope to have hearers who does not possess the theology of the Bible." Happy the university which can have such testimony in its favour!

Luther, while attacking Aristotle, at the same time took part with Erasmus and Reuchlin against their enemies. With these great men, and with others among the learned, such as Pirckheimer, Mutian, Hutten, all belonging more or less to the same party, he entered into intimate ties; at this time, likewise, he formed another friendship which proved of the utmost importance to him during the rest of his life.

There then lived at the elector's court, George Spalatin, a man of remarkable wisdom and candour. He was a native of Spalatus, or Spalt, in the bishoprick of Eichstadt; and began life as parish priest of the village of Hohenkirch, near the forests of Thuringia. He was afterwards selected by Frederick the Wise, as his secretary, his chaplain, and preceptor to his nephew, John Frederick, who was subsequently to wear the electoral crown. Retaining his simplicity even in the midst of a court, Spalatin nevertheless appeared faint-hearted in the presence of great events; and when compared with the ardent Luther, with whom he maintained a daily correspondence, he was like his master, circumspect and prudent.³ He resembled

¹ *Perdita studia nostri sæculi.* Epp. i. 15. (8th Feb. 1516.)

² Ep. i. 57. (dated 18th May, 1517.)

³ *Secundum genium heri sui.* (Weismann, *Hist. Eccl.* i. p. 1131.)

Staupitz, in being made for peaceful rather than for troubled times. Such men are necessary: they are like the soft substances in which jewels and crystals are wrapt for the purpose of protecting them from injury on a journey; apparently useless, yet without which such valuables would be broken and destroyed. Spalatin was not a man fitted for great undertakings; but he acquitted himself faithfully and without noise, of the task assigned to him.¹ He began by being one of his master's chief helpers, in collecting those relics of saints of which Frederick was long an amateur; but with that prince he inclined gradually to the side of truth. Not that the faith which was then re-appearing in the Church, made the vivid impression upon him that it did upon Luther; he was led on by slower methods. He became Luther's friend at court, the minister through whose hands all matters between the reformer and the princes, passed, and the mediator between the Church and the State. The elector honoured Spalatin with great intimacy; so much so, that in travelling they were always in the same carriage?² We have to add that the air of the court was often oppressive to the good chaplain; he was subject to fits of profound melancholy; he would fain have relinquished all these honours and returned, as simple pastor, to the woods of Thuringia. But Luther exhorted him to remain firm at his post. Spalatin was generally esteemed, and had testimonies of the most sincere regard given him both by the princes and the learned men of that time. Erasmus said: "I inscribe the name of Spalatin not only among my chief friends, but, still more, among those of my most venerated protectors; and that, not on paper but on my heart."³

The affair of Reuchlin and the monks was then making a great noise in Germany; and it was one in which even the most pious men were often at a loss which part to take, for the monks wanted to destroy Jewish books containing blasphemies against Christ. The elector instructed his chaplain on this point to consult the Wittemberg doctor, whose reputation already stood high. The following is the answer sent by Luther, and it is the first letter that he addressed to the court preacher.

¹ *Fideliter et sine strepitu fungens.* (Ibid.)

² *Qui cum principe in rheda sive lectico solitus est ferri.* (Corpus Reformatum, i. 33.)

³ Melch. Ad. Vita Spalat., p. 100.

“What shall I say? These monks say they want to expel Beelzebub,—not however by the finger of God. I cease not to lament and groan over this. We Christians—we would begin with being wise abroad, and at home we are fools?¹ There are blasphemies, a hundred times worse than those of the Jews, in all the public places of Jerusalem; and everything there teems with spiritual idols. These enemies at home we ought to set ourselves with a noble zeal to remove and destroy. But what is urgent we leave untouched, and the devil himself persuades us to abandon what concerns ourselves, at the same time that he thwarts our attempts to correct what concerns others.”

VIII. Luther did not lose himself in this quarrel. His heart and life were engrossed by a living faith in Christ. “In my heart,” says he, “reigns alone, and alone likewise ought there to reign, faith in my Saviour Jesus Christ, who alone is the beginning, the middle, and the end of all the thoughts that occupy my mind, night and day.”²

All his hearers listened to him with admiration, while he spoke of this faith in Jesus Christ, whether from the professor's chair or from the pulpit. Light flowed from his instructions. People were astonished at not having sooner acknowledged truths which in his mouth seemed so evident. “The desire of self-justification,” he used to say, “is the source of all the pangs that are felt by man's heart. But he that receives Jesus Christ as a Saviour, has peace; and not only peace, but pureness of heart. All sanctification of heart is a fruit of faith. For faith is in us a divine operation which changes us, and gives us a new birth, derived from God himself. It slays Adam in us; and by the Holy Spirit, which it communicates to us, it gives us a new heart, and makes us new men.” “It is not by crude speculations,” he farther asserts, “but it is in this practical way³ that a man can obtain a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.”⁴

It was then that Luther preached those discourses on the ten

¹ *Foris sapere et domi desipere.* (L. Epp. i. p. 8.)

² *Præf. ad Gal.*

³ *Non per speculationem, sed per hanc viam practicam.*

⁴ Thus it was not any desire to procure fame to himself as the author of new doctrine, but it was the workings of his own conscience that made Luther acquainted with the truth, and made him so ardently desirous that it should be preached anew.—L. R.

commandments, which have come down to us under the title of *popular declamations*. Errors, no doubt, occur in these discourses; Luther himself was enlightened but by little and little; *the path of the just is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day*; yet how much truth do we find in them; how much simplicity; how much eloquence! It is well that we should thoroughly comprehend the effect which such a preacher must have produced on his auditory, and on his age! We shall quote but one passage, taken from the commencement.

Luther entered the pulpit at Wittemberg and read these words: *Thou shalt have no other gods*. Addressing himself then to the people who filled the sanctuary, he said: "All the sons of Adam are idolaters, and guilty of transgressing this first commandment." ¹

No doubt, this strange assertion surprised the auditory. It was necessary to justify it, and the speaker went on as follows: "There are two kinds of idolatry; the one external, and the other internal.

"There is outward idolatry, in which man worships wood, stone, beasts, the stars.

"There is inward idolatry, in which man, dreading punishment, or consulting his own ease, does not, indeed, perform acts of worship to the creature, but inwardly loves it and confides in it. . . .

"What a religion is this! You do not bow the knee before riches and honours, but you make them an offering of your hearts, the most noble part of yourselves. . . . Ah, you worship God with your bodies, and the creature with your souls.

"This idolatry reigns in every man, until freely healed by the faith which is in Jesus Christ.

"And how is this healing effected? ²

"As follows. Faith in Christ takes from you all confidence in your own wisdom, in your own righteousness, in your own strength; it teaches you that if Christ had not died for you, and

¹ Omnes filii Adæ sunt idololatræ. (Decem præcepta Wittembergensi populo prædicata per R. P. D. Martinum Lutherum Aug. anno 1516.) These discourses were delivered in German: we quote the Latin edition, i. p. 1.

² Nisi ipse pro te mortuus esset, teque servaret, nec tu, nec omnis creatur tibi posset prodesse. (Ibid.)

had not thus saved you, neither you, nor any creature, could have benefitted you. You then learn to despise all these things, for to you they remain useless.

“There remains nothing for you but Jesus, none but Jesus, Jesus alone, Jesus fully sufficing for your soul. No longer hoping any thing from all creatures, you have nothing but Christ, from whom you hope all, and whom you love above all.

“Now, Jesus is the true, one, only God, whom having, none other God do you have.”¹

Thus does Luther show how the soul is brought back to God, its chief good, by the gospel; following that word of Christ: *I am the way: no man cometh unto the Father but by me*. The man who thus addresses his age, would do more than merely subvert some abuses; his grand aim is to establish true religion. His work is not merely negative; in the first instance it is positive.

Luther next directs his discourse against the superstitions with which Christendom was then over-run; mysterious signs and characters, the observance of certain days and certain months, familiar demons, ghosts, the influence of the stars, witches, metamorphoses, incubuses and succubuses, the patronage of saints, &c. &c. &c., he attacks these idols one after another, and vigorously assails these false gods.

But it was at the academy chiefly, and in the presence of young men of intelligent minds, and thirsting for truth, that Luther opened out the treasures of the Word of God. His illustrious friend Melanchthon tells us, that “his manner of expounding the scriptures was such, that in the judgment of all enlightened and pious men, it was as if a new day were dawning on doctrine, after a long deep night. He showed the difference between law and gospel. He refuted the error, then predominant in the churches and the schools, which held that men merited the forgiveness of sins by their own works, and are made righteous before God, by an external discipline. He thus recalled men’s minds to the Son of God.”² Like John the Baptist, he pointed to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the

¹ At Jesus est verus, unus, solus Deus, quem cum habes, non habes alienum deum. (Ibid.)

² Revocavit igitur Lutherus hominum mentes ad Filium Dei. (Melanchthon Vit. Luth.)

world; he made people comprehend that men's sins are freely pardoned for the sake of the Son of God, and that man receives this benefit by faith. He made no change in ceremonies; on the contrary, no man in all his order, more faithfully observed and defended established discipline. But he strove more and more to make all comprehend those great and essential doctrines, that of conversion, that of the forgiveness of sins, faith, and the true consolations that are to be found in the cross. All godly persons were greatly taken with the sweetness of this doctrine; it was grateful even to the learned.¹ It might have been said that Christ, and the apostles, and prophets, had come forth out of darkness, and from a loathsome dungeon."²

Luther's teaching derived great authority from the firmness with which he rested on Scripture, but other circumstances added farther to his weight. His life corresponded to his words, and all knew that his discourses had a deeper origin than the lips from which they fell.³ They came from the heart, and were exemplified in all that he did. And when, subsequently, the Reformation burst forth, many influential men, who looked on with great grief at the rendings of the Church, had been already so much pre-possessed in the Reformer's favour, by the sanctity of his manners and the charms of his genius, that not only did they not oppose him, but even embraced the doctrine to which his works rendered such a testimony.⁴

The more a man loved the Christian virtues, the more did he lean to the Reformer. All honest divines were in his favour.⁵ This is what is said by such as knew him; in particular, by Melancthon, the wisest man of his age, and by Erasmus, Luther's illustrious adversary. Envy and prejudice alone have dared to speak of his debaucheries. Wittenberg was changed by that preaching of faith, and became the focus of an illumination which was soon to enlighten Germany, and to diffuse itself over all the Church.

¹ *Hujus doctrinæ dulcedine pii omnes valde capiebantur, et eruditis grata erat.* (Melanct. Vit. Luth.)

² *Quasi ex tenebris, carcere, squalore educi Christum, prophetas, apostolos.* (Ibid.)

³ *Oratio non in labris nasci, sed in pectore.* (Ibid.)

⁴ *Eique propter auctoritatem, quam sanctitate morum antea pepererat, adserunt.* (Melanct. Vit. Luth.)

⁵ *Puto et hodiè theologos omnes probos favere Luthero.* (Erasmus Epp. i. 652.)

Luther's tenderly affectionate heart wished to see all whom he loved, in the possession of that light which had guided his own feet into the paths of peace. He availed himself of all the opportunities that fell in his way, as professor, as preacher, as monk, as well as in the course of his extensive correspondence, to make others share in this treasure. An old brother monk of the monastery at Erfurt, George Spenlein, happened then to be in that of Memmingen, possibly after having spent some time at Wittemberg. Spenlein had commissioned the doctor to sell several articles which he had left with him; a jacket of Brussels cloth, a work written by an Isenac doctor, and a monk's hood. Luther carefully complied with his friend's request. He tells Spenlein, in a letter dated 7th April, 1516, that he had got a florin for the jacket, half that for the book, and a florin for the hood; all which he had paid over to the father-vicar, to whom Spenlein owed three florins. Luther, however, soon passes from accounting for these monkish leavings, to a more important subject.

"I could wish to know," says he to friar George, "how it fares with your soul. Is it not tired of its own righteousness? In fine, does it not pant after—does it not place all its trust in the righteousness of Christ? In our days, many are seduced from it by pride; those especially who give their whole endeavours to being righteous. Not understanding the righteousness of God which is freely given to us in Jesus Christ, they would stand before him on the strength of their deservings. But that cannot be. You, when you were staying with us, were in that error; and I too, was misled by it. I am still struggling against it, and have not yet completely triumphed.

"O my dear brother, learn to know Christ and Christ crucified. Learn to sing to him a new song, to despair of thyself, and to say to him: Thou, Lord Jesus, thou art my righteousness, and I, I am thy sin. Thou hast taken what was mine and thou hast given me what is thine.¹ What thou wast not, that thou hast become, in order that I may become what I was not!—Beware, O my dear George, of pretending to such a degree of purity, as to cease regarding thyself a sinner. For it is only in

¹ Tu, Domine Jesu, es justitia mea; ego autem sum peccatum tuum: tu assumpsisti meum, et dedisti mihi tuum. (L. Epp. i. p. 17.)

sinner that Christ dwells. He came down from heaven where he dwelt in the righteous, in order that he might dwell also in sinners. Carefully meditate on this love of Christ, and thou shalt then derive from it the sweets of ineffable consolation. Could our works, and our afflictions, procure for us peace of conscience, why should Christ have died? Thou shalt find peace only in him, by despairing of thyself and thy works, and by learning with what love he opens his arms to receive thee, taking thy sins upon him and giving thee all his righteousness."

Thus that mighty doctrine which had already saved the world in the days of the apostles, and which was about to save it a second time in those of the reformers, was clearly and powerfully held forth by Luther. In this he passed over numerous ages of ignorance and superstition, and joined hands with St. Paul.

Spemlein was not the only person whom he thus endeavoured to instruct on this fundamental doctrine. He was disquieted at the scanty amount of truth which, under that head, he found in the writings of Erasmus; but although it was important that a man of so much weight, and such admirable genius, should be enlightened, it was not easy to determine how it should be done. His court friend, the elector's chaplain, enjoyed the respect of Erasmus: to him, therefore, Luther addressed himself, writing as follows: "What pains me in Erasmus, that most learned man, my dear Spalatin, is that by the righteousness of works or of the law, of which the apostle speaks, he understands the fulfilling of the ceremonial law. Now, the righteousness of the law consists not only in ceremonies but in all the works of the Decalogue.¹ When these works are done without faith in Christ,

¹ It was therefore no mere expository difference, of little or no importance in Luther's view, as some would now have it to appear. Either the law, spoken of in Holy Scripture in the matter of our justification, is the ceremonial law only, or the moral too; but this is a capital distinction, which Luther could not allow to pass unobserved in Erasmus. True, indeed, it belongs also to the exposition, or rather to the right understanding of Scripture: but it is so clear, and so completely interwoven with the entire spirit of the doctrine contained in Scripture, as on the one hand, to be self-evident to the man who reads with simplicity, without prejudice, and, above all, with an eager desire for personal consolation; while, on the other hand, the whole scheme of doctrine after this article is admitted, is reversed and changes its aspect; so that, indeed, a new Holy Scripture seems to shine forth. Thus did it appear quite in a new aspect by means of the light thrown upon it by Luther and by the plain demonstration that all works, even those of a moral description, were referred to: and no

they may, it is true, make men such as Fabricius, Regulus, and others, of perfect integrity in the eyes of men; but in that case they deserve as little to be called *righteousness* as the fruit of a medlar to be called a fig. For we do not become righteous, as Aristotle pretends, by doing works of righteousness; but having become righteous, we do such works.¹ The man must first be changed and then the works. Abel was first righteous before God and then his sacrifice." Luther continues: "I beg of you herein to do the part of a friend and a Christian, by pointing out these things to Erasmus." This letter is dated thus; "In haste, from our monastery corner, 19th October, 1516." It places the relations between Luther and Erasmus in their true light. It shows the sincere interest he felt in what he believed to be really useful to that illustrious writer. It is true that at a later period, the opposition made by Erasmus to the truth, compelled Luther to attack him openly, but this was not until he had first endeavoured to enlighten his antagonist.

Now at length, ideas, at once clear and profound, were set forth on the nature of good; and it was proclaimed as a principle, that the real goodness of an action consists, not in its outward form, but in the spirit in which it is done, and thus a death-blow was given to all those superstitious observances which for a series of centuries had been stifling the Church, and preventing the Christian virtues from growing and flourishing in it.

Luther farther writes; "I read Erasmus, but he is daily losing credit in my eyes. I love to see him reprove, with so much learning and firmness, the priests and monks for their dogged ignorance; but I fear that it is but small service he does to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. He has more at heart what depends on man than what depends on God.² We live in perilous times. A man is not a good or judicious Christian because he understands Greek and Hebrew. Jerome who was versed in five languages, is inferior to Augustine who understood only one; although Erasmus may think the contrary. I carefully conceal

sooner do we limit the doings, whereby we cannot be justified, to ceremonial acts, than we return to the old and long-enduring darkness from which Luther delivered us.—L. R.

¹ Non enim justa agendo justī efficiūtur, sed justī fiendo et essendo, operantur justa. (L. Epp. i. p. 22.)

² Humana prævalent in eo plusquam divina.

what I think of Erasmus, in the dread of strengthening the cause of his opponents. Perhaps the Lord will give him understanding in his own time.”¹

Man’s impotency, God’s omnipotence,—such were the two truths which Luther sought to restore. It is a poor religion, and a poor philosophy, that throws man on his natural strength. That so much vaunted strength of his, has been tried for ages; yet, while man of himself has been enabled to make wonderful attainments in what relates to his earthly existence, he has never been able either to dispel the darkness that hides the knowledge of God from his mind, or to change a single leaning of his heart. The highest degree of wisdom ever attained by ambitious minds or by souls burning with the desire of perfection, has been to despair of themselves.² The doctrine, then, which discovers to us our own powerlessness, while it tells us of a power from God, by which we may do all things, is a generous, a consolatory, and an absolutely true doctrine; and great was that reformation which re-asserted the glory of heaven upon earth, and which pleads with man for the prerogatives of the mighty God.

No man, however, knew better than Luther, that close and indissoluble bond which unites the free salvation of God with the liberty of human actions; and no man showed better than he did, that it is only by receiving all from Christ, that man can give much to his brethren. He ever presented these two operations, the works of God, and the works of man, in one picture. Thus, after having laid before friar Spenlein the nature of saving righteousness, he adds: “If thou dost firmly believe these things as thou oughtest to do, (for cursed is whoever believes them not) welcome thy still ignorant and erring brethren as Jesus Christ hath welcomed thee. Patiently bear with them; make their sins thine own, and if thou hast any thing good, communicate it to them. Receive one another, says the apostle, as Christ hath received us, for the glory of God. That is a miserable righteousness which will not bear with others because it finds them bad, and thinks only of seeking the solitude of the

¹ Dabit ei dominus intellectum suo fortè tempore. (L. Epp. i. p. 52.)

² Τί οὖν; δυνατόν ἀναμετρητὸν εἶναι ἥδη. What! is it possible not to sin? asks Epictetus, (iv. 12, 19.) Ἄδύνατον. Impossible! he replies.

wilderness, instead of doing them good by patience, by prayer, and by example. If thou be-est the lily and the rose of Christ, know that thy dwelling is among thorns. Only beware lest, by thine impatience, thy rash judgments, and thy secret pride, thou dost thyself become a thorn. Christ reigns in the midst of his enemies. Had he desired to dwell only among the good and to die for those only who loved him, for whom, I pray you, would he have died, and among whom would he have dwelt?"¹

It is affecting to see how well Luther sets himself to practise these charitable precepts. An Erfurt Augustinian, George Leiffer by name, was struggling with several trials; Luther was apprized of this, and eight days after writing to Spenlein, he compassionately went to him: "I learn," said he, "that you are tossed by many storms and that your mind is driven to and fro by the waves. . . . The cross of Christ has been portioned out over all the earth, and each has his part. Reject not then what has fallen to thy share. Rather receive it as a sacred relic, not into a vessel of gold or silver, but which is much better, into a golden heart; a heart full of meekness. If the wood of the cross has been so sanctified by the blood and the flesh of Christ, that we regard it as the most august of relics, how much more ought insults, persecutions, sufferings, and the hatred of men, to be to us holy relics, seeing that these have not only been touched by the flesh of Christ, but that they were embraced, kissed, blessed by his boundless love."²

IX. Luther's teaching was not without fruit. Several of his disciples now felt themselves urged to make a public profession of the truths which their master's lectures had opened up to

¹ Hence it clearly appears that the true reformed doctrine, as come down from Luther and deduced anew from Holy Scripture, cannot consist with the doctrines of Erasmus, however learned the latter might be, particularly in the article of justification by grace. With the views of Erasmus men may remain in the Roman Church, as he remained in it, or may return to it. With the doctrine of Luther, no permanent union with that church is possible, or with a church which while it calls itself reformed, under that head holds the view entertained by Erasmus. The differences between the remonstrants, Erasmus's successors, and the contra-remonstrants who followed Luther, (I say designedly Luther, not Calvin) on the other side, have shown this to be the case, and these between the Old and New reformed in our day demonstrate it anew. Never can men—for in spite of every effort it is completely impossible—keep the two united in lasting Church fellowship. The difference existing on this single question, although it may be called expository only, involves that of life and death, namely, the true life or death of the soul.—L. R.

² Sanctissimæ reliquiæ. . . . deificæ voluntatis suæ charitate amplexæ, osculatæ. (L. Epp. i. 18.)

them. Among his hearers there was a young man of learning, called Bernard of Feldkirchen, university professor of Aristotle's physics, and, five years afterwards, the first of the evangelical ecclesiastics who entered into the bonds of matrimony.

It was Luther's wish that Feldkirchen should, under his presidency, maintain certain theses, comprising an exposition of his principles. This gave the doctrines he professed a new publicity. The disputation was held in 1516.

This was the first assault made by Luther on the kingdom of the sophists and on the popedom, as he himself tells us; and feeble as it was, it cost him much uneasiness. "I permit the printing of these propositions," says he many years after, when he gave them a place in his works, "chiefly in order that I may not be puffed up by the greatness of my cause and the success wherewith God has crowned it. For they fully manifest my shame, that is to say, the weakness and the ignorance, the fear and trembling, with which I began this struggle. I stood alone; I threw myself imprudently into that affair. Unable to retreat, I yielded many important points to the Pope, and even adored him."¹

The following are some of these propositions:²

"The old man is vanity of vanities; he is altogether vanity; and he makes the other creatures vain, however good they may be.

"The old man is called *the flesh*, not only because he is led by the lust of the sense, but farther because granting him to be chaste, prudent, and righteous, he is not born anew, of God, by the Spirit.

"A man who is without the grace of God, cannot keep God's commandments, nor prepare himself, either in whole or in part, for receiving grace, but he necessarily remains under sin.

"Man's will without grace, is not free, but is in bondage, and that of its own accord.

"Jesus Christ, our strength, our righteousness, he who tries the heart and the reins, is the only searcher and judge of our merits.

"Since all is possible by Christ to him who believes, it is

¹ Sed etiam ultro adorabam. (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 50)

² L. Opp. (L) xvii. p. 142; and in vol. i. p. 51. of his Latin works.

superstitious to seek for other aid, whether in the human will or in the saints.”¹

This disputation made much noise, and has been considered as the commencement of the Reformation.

The moment now drew near for that Reformation breaking forth. God hastened to make ready the instrument which he wished to employ. The elector, having built a new church at Wittemberg, and given it the name of All Saints church, sent Staupitz into the Low Countries to make up a collection of relics, with which he wanted to adorn this new place of worship. The vicar-general engaged Luther to supply his place during his absence, and, in particular, to make a visitation through forty monasteries in Misnia and Thuringia.

Luther went first to Grimma and then to Dresden. He everywhere sought to establish the truths of which he had been convinced, and to enlighten the members of his order. . . . “Do not attach yourselves to Aristotle or to other teachers of a deceptive philosophy,” said he to the monks, “but read the Word of God assiduously. Seek not your salvation in your own strength and your good works, but in Christ’s merits and in divine grace.”²

An Augustinian friar of Dresden had deserted his monastery, and was found at Maintz, where the prior of that order had received him. Luther wrote to this prior, asking back this stray sheep, and added the following very true and very charitable expressions: “I know, I do know that offences will come. It is no miracle that a man falls, but it is one that he should rise again and stand upright. Peter fell that he might know that he was but a man. At this day do we still see the very cedars of Lebanon falling. Even the angels, which passes all comprehension, fell in heaven, and Adam fell in paradise. Why, then, be amazed if a reed is shaken by the whirlwind, or if the smoking flax go out?”

From Dresden Luther passed on to Erfurt, and re-appeared discharging the functions of vicar-general in the same monastery where, eleven years before, he had wound up the clock, opened

¹ Cum credenti omnia sint, auctore Christo, possibilia, superstitiosum est, humano arbitrio, aliis sanctis, alia deputari auxilia. (Ibid.)

² Hilscher’s Luther’s Anwesenheit in Alt. Dresden, 1728.

the gate, and swept the church. His friend the bachelor, John Lange, a learned and godly man, but severe, he made prior of the monastery. He exhorted him to affability and patience. "Adopt," said he, "a mild spirit towards the prior of Nuremberg; this is but fit, for the prior has adopted a rough and bitter spirit. Bitterness is not expelled by bitterness, the devil by the devil; but the sweet dissipates the bitter, that is to say, the finger of God expels the demons."¹ There is room, perhaps, to regret that Luther did not, on divers occasions, bear these excellent counsels in mind himself.

At Neustadt on Orla, there was nothing but divisions. Troubles and quarrels reigned in the monastery, and all the monks were at war with their prior. They assailed Luther with their complaints, while the prior, Michael Dressel, or Tornator, as Luther calls him, translating his name into Latin, on his side, laid all his griefs before the doctor. "Peace, peace!" said he: "You want peace," said Luther, "but it is the peace of the world, not that of Christ. Know you not then, that our God has placed his peace in the midst of war? That man has not peace whom nobody troubles. But he who, though molested by all men and by all things belonging to this life, endures all calmly and joyfully, that man possesses true peace. You say with Israel; Peace, peace! and there is no peace. Say rather with Christ; The cross, the cross! and there will be no cross. For the cross ceases to be the cross as soon as one can affectionately say, No wood like thine!"² In his anxiety to put an end to these divisions, Luther, on his return to Wittemberg, allowed the monks to elect another prior.

Luther returned to Wittemberg, after an absence of six months. He had been afflicted at all he had seen; but this journey increased his knowledge of the Church and of the world; it gave him more confidence in his dealings with mankind; it afforded him many occasions for founding schools, for urging that fundamental truth—that Holy Scripture alone points out the way to heaven, and for exhorting the friars to live together in

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 36. Non enim asper asperum, id est non diabolus diabolum, sed suavis asperum, id est digitus Dei ejicit dæmonia.

² Tam cito enim crux cessat esse crux, quam cito lætus dixeris: Crux benedicta! inter ligna nullum tale. (Epp. i. 27.)

holiness, peaceableness, and chastity.¹ No doubt an abundant scattering of the good seed took place throughout the various monasteries of Augustinians, in the course of this journey made by the Reformer. The monastic orders, long as they had been the props of Rome, did more perhaps for the Reformation than they did against it; and this may be said particularly of the Augustinians. Almost all godly men of liberal and elevated minds then residing in cloisters, turned towards the Gospel. New and generous blood soon flowed in those orders which were, as it were, the arteries of German catholicity. Nothing was known in the world at large of the views entertained by the Augustinian monk of Wittemberg; these, however, had become the chief topic of conversations in the chapters and monasteries; and more than one cloister became a nursery of the Reformation. At the very moment when the grand blows were struck, godly and powerful men came forth from obscurity, and exchanged the retirement of the monastic life for the active career of ministers of the Word of God. Even so early as in that tour of inspection in 1516, Luther's eloquence aroused many slumbering souls; hence that year has been called the morning-star of the Reformation.

Luther now resumed his ordinary occupations. He was overwhelmed with work: not only was he professor, preacher, and confessor; he was farther charged with a great many secular occupations relating to his own order and monastery. "I almost always require two secretaries," he says in a letter, "for I scarcely do anything else during the whole day but write letters. I am preacher to the monastery, speaker at the table, parish pastor and preacher, director of studies, vicar of the prior, (that is to say, eleven times prior!) inspector of the ponds of Litzkau, advocate of the inns of Herzberg at Torgau, reader of St. Paul, and commentator on the Psalms. . . . Seldom have I time to repeat my hours or to sing; not to speak of the struggle with flesh and blood, with the devil and with the world.

. . . You may see how leisurely I have become!"² . . .

About this time the plague appeared at Wittemberg, on which occasion many of the students and doctors quitted that

¹ Heiliglich, friedlich und züchtig. (Math. p. 10.)

² Epp. i. p. 41, to Lange, 26th Oct. 1516.

city. Luther remained. "I know not," he writes to a friend at Erfurt, "if the plague will let me finish the Epistle to the Galatians. Prompt and blunt, it makes great ravages, especially among the young. You advise me to fly. Whither would you have me go? I hope the world is not to fall, though friar Martin were to do so.¹ Should the plague continue on the increase, I shall send the friars away in all directions; but for myself, here I am placed; obedience will not allow me to fly, until recalled by him who called me. Not that I do not dread death, (for I am not the apostle Paul, but his commentator only;) but I trust that the Lord will deliver me from fear." Such was the firmness of the doctor of Wittemberg. And can we suppose that the man who would not fall back one step from the plague, would fall back in the presence of Rome? Or that the dread of a public execution could make him yield?

X. Luther evinced the same courage in regard to the mighty of this world, that he displayed in presence of the most formidable calamities. The Elector was highly satisfied with the vicar-general. He had made a good collection of relics in the Low Countries. Luther gives an account of these to Spalatin, and it is curious to find such an affair as this of the relics gravely spoken of, just as the Reformation was commencing. Little, assuredly, were the reformers aware, to what an extent they were about to carry it. The Elector considered a bishopric as the least return he could make to the vicar-general, but Luther, who had received a letter from Spalatin on the subject, quite disapproved of such an idea. "There are many things," says he, "which please your prince, but which, nevertheless, are displeasing to God."² I deny not that he is an able man in worldly matters; but in what relates to God, and the salvation of souls, I regard him as seven-fold blind; as is, also, Pfeffinger, his counsellor. I say not this behind their backs as a calumniator: I do not conceal it from them, for I am ready myself, and on all occasions, to tell both as much to their face. "Why would you," he continues, "surround this man (Staupitz) with all the squalls and storms of episcopal cares?"

¹ Quo fugiam? spero quod non corruet orbis, ruente fratre Martino. (Epp. i. p. 42, 26th Oct. 1516.)

² Multa placent principi tuo, quæ Deo displicent. (L. Epp. i. 25.)

The Elector was not offended at Luther's frankness. Spalatin wrote to him: "the prince often speaks of you, and very honourably." Frederick had sent the monk, materials for making a frock of the finest cloth. "It would be too beautiful," said Luther, "but that it was the gift of a prince. I am unworthy of being remembered by any man, far less by a prince, and so great a prince. Those are my best friends who think the worst of me.¹ Thank our prince for this favour; yet be assured, that I have no wish to be praised, either by you, or by any man, all praise of man being vain, and the praise that cometh from God being that which alone is true."

The excellent chaplain did not wish to confine himself to his court functions. He wanted to make himself useful to the people; but like most persons in all ages, this he wished to do without giving offence or irritating any, and so as to conciliate general favour. "Point out to me," he wrote to Luther, "something to translate into the vulgar tongue, but let it be something generally pleasing, and which may at the same time do good."—"Pleasing and useful," replied Luther, "this request exceeds my utmost power. The more salutary things are, the less they please.² What more salutary than Jesus Christ? Nevertheless, to most persons, he is a savour of death. You tell me that you would be useful to those only who love what is good. You have then but to make the voice of Jesus Christ to be heard; you will then be at once pleasing and useful, doubt it not, but only to the small minority; for few are the sheep in this sad region of wolves."³

Luther, nevertheless, recommended to his friend the sermons of the Dominican Tauler. "I have never seen," says he, "either in Latin, or in our own tongue, a theology more sound or more accordant with the gospel. Taste then, and see how good the Lord is, but after having tasted and seen this, how bitter is all that we ourselves are."⁴

It was in the course of the year 1517, that Luther entered

¹ *Hi mihi maximè prosunt, qui mei pessimè meminerint.* (L. Epp. i. p. 45.)

² *Quo sunt aliqua salubriora, eo minus placent.* (Ibid. 46.)

³ How nobly does the spirit of Luther shine out here! No, such a man had no personal ends to serve. It was the cause of truth, of the Lord's honour, and the salvation of souls that urged him on.—L. R.

⁴ *Quam amarum est, quicquid nos sumus.* (L. Epp. i. p. 46.)

into relations with duke George of Saxony. The house of Saxony had then two chiefs. Two princes, Ernest and Albert, after being taken by force, when young, from the castle of Altenburg, by Kunz of Kaufungen, had, by the treaty of Leipsick, become the founders of the two houses that still bear their name. Elector Frederick, son of Ernest, was at the time of which we are writing, chief of the Ernestine branch, while his cousin, duke George, was chief of the Albertine branch. Dresden and Leipsick were in the duke's territories, and the former was his place of residence. His mother Sidonia, was a daughter of the king of Bohemia, George Podiebrad; and the long struggle between that country and Rome, from the times of John Huss downwards, had exerted some influence on the prince of Saxony. He had often shown himself desirous of effecting a reformation, a desire which it was said, "he had imbibed with his mother's milk," and that "he was from his very nature an enemy to the clergy." In various ways he was perpetually annoying the bishops, abbots, canons, and monks; so that his cousin, Frederick, had more than once to interfere in their favour. One would have expected duke George to be the warmest partisan of a reformation, while the ultra-devout Frederick, on the contrary, who had erewhile donned the spurs of Godfrey at the holy sepulchre, who had girded himself with the huge heavy sword of the conqueror of Jerusalem, and sworn that like the gallant knight of other days, he would fight for the Church, seemed likely to become the most ardent champion of Rome. But in all that relates to the gospel, the anticipations of human wisdom often prove deceptive; the reverse of what might have been expected took place. The duke would have been delighted to humble the Church and the men of the Church, to mortify bishops whose train of princes far surpassed his own; but it was quite another thing for him to receive into his heart that gospel truth which must have humbled him, to own himself a sinner, guilty, and incapable of being saved but by grace. He would willingly have reformed others, but had no wish to reform himself. He might possibly have put his hand to the work of obliging the bishop of Maintz to be content with a single see, and to have no more than fourteen horses in his stables,¹ as he repeat-

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1849.



edly said, but when he saw another, and he a mere monk, appear as a reformer and the reformation gaining numerous partisans among the common people, the Hussite king's haughty grandson became the most violent adversary of the very reform whose cause he had showed himself disposed to espouse.

In July, 1517, duke George applied to Staupitz for a learned and eloquent preacher. The latter sent Luther, recommending him as a man of great acquirements and irreproachable conduct. The prince invited him to preach in the castle chapel at Dresden on St. James the greater's day.

On the appointed day, the duke and his court went to chapel to hear the Wittenberg preacher; and Luther joyfully took advantage of the occasion, to bear testimony to the truth before such an auditory. He took his text from the gospel for that day: "*then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons,*" &c. (St. Mat. chap. xx. 20—23.) He discoursed on men's senseless desires and prayers; and next spoke forcibly on the assurance of salvation, making it repose on this foundation, that those who hear the Word of God with faith are the true disciples of Jesus Christ, elected to everlasting life. He then spoke of election by grace; showing that this doctrine, if it be urged in its union with the work of Christ, is powerfully fitted to dissipate terrors of conscience, in such sort, that instead of men fleeing from the holy God in the view of their unworthiness, they are gently drawn to look for their refuge in him. In conclusion, he told a parable respecting three virgins, and drew from it some edifying instructions.

The Word of truth made a deep impression on the hearers, of whom there were two, in particular, who seemed to listen with fixed attention to the discourse of the monk from Wittenberg. The one was a lady of respectable appearance, seated on the court benches, and the expression of whose features betokened profound emotion. Madam de la Sale was her name; grand mistress to the duchess. The other was Jerome Emser, a licentiate in canon law, the duke's secretary and counsellor. Emser was a man of talent and extensive information. Uniting the suppleness of a courtier with the ability of a politician, he wished to stand well with two opposite parties at once; passing himself off at Rome as a defender of the popedom and, at the same time, shining

in Germany among the learned of his age. But under this flexibility of character he concealed violent passions; Luther and he were destined to break more than one lance with each other, and they now met, for the first time, in the castle-chapel at Dresden.

The dinner bell had rung for the inmates of the castle, and soon the ducal family and persons attached to the court were met at table. The preacher of that morning naturally became the topic of conversation. "How liked you the sermon?" said the Duke to Madam de la Sale.—"Could I but hear one more such discourse," she replied, "I should die in peace."—"And I," said George passionately, "I would give a great deal not to have heard it; for such sermons are good for nothing but to make people sin with assurance."

It needed only that the master should thus intimate his opinion, for the courtiers to speak out their discontentment without restraint. Each was prepared to make his remarks. Some pretended that in his parable of the three virgins, Luther had three of the ladies of the court in his eye; whereupon there was talking without end. A little raillery began to be indulged with regard to the three ladies, who were assured that they had been pointed out to public notice by the Wittemberg monk.¹ He is an ignoramus, said some; he is a haughty monk, said others. Each commented on the sermon in his own manner, and put what he pleased into the preacher's mouth. Truth had been dropped in the midst of a court but little prepared to receive it. And now it was rent in pieces among them at will. But while the word of God was thus an occasion of fall to many, it was a helping-stone that enabled the grand mistress to rise. A month after this she fell sick, confidently embraced the grace of the Saviour, and departed this life in joy.²

As for the Duke, perhaps it was not in vain that he heard this testimony to the truth; for whatever might have been his opposition to the Reformation during life, it is known that on his death-bed he declared that he had hope in the merits of Jesus Christ alone.

It was natural for Emser to do the honours to Luther in his

¹ Illas tres postea in aula principis a me notatas garriuerunt. (L. Epp. i. 85.)

² Keith, *I. eb. Luth.* p. 32.

master's name. He invited him to supper; Luther declined; but Emser insisted and constrained him to come. Luther expected to find a few friends met, but soon discovered that a snare had been laid for him,¹ for in the house of the prince's secretary, he encountered a master of arts from Leipsick and several Dominicans. The master of arts, puffed up with a conceited notion of himself, and heartily hating Luther, first addressed him in a friendly and insinuating air; but soon after lost his temper, and inveighed against him with loud-tongued acrimony.² A regular controversy soon commenced, the dispute turning, says Luther, on the trifling things of Aristotle and St. Thomas.³ In the end, Luther defied the master of arts, with all the erudition of the Thomists, to define what was meant by keeping God's commandments. The master of arts, though embarrassed, was not to be put out of countenance. "Pay me my dues," said he, holding out his hand, "*da pastum.*" One would have said that he wished to commence giving a lecture in the forms, taking his guests for scholars. "At this foolish reply," adds the reformer, "we took to laughing and then separated."

During this conversation, a Dominican had been listening at the door. He had wished to go in and spit in Luther's face,⁴ and though at the time he restrained himself, yet he bragged of his intention afterwards. Emser, overjoyed to see his guest grow warm in dispute, and to appear himself to observe the happy mean, was at great pains to apologise to Luther for the manner in which the evening had passed.⁵ The latter returned to Wittemberg.

XI. He zealously resumed his labours. He was now bringing forward six or seven young theologians who were soon to be examined previous to their obtaining licence to preach; and what most delighted him was that this promotion was to be to the discredit of Aristotle. "I would fain multiply his enemies as fast as possible"⁶ he would say, and for that purpose he published certain theses which deserve our attention.

The freedom of the will was the grand subject of which he

¹ Inter medias me insidias conjectum. (L. Epp. i. 85.)

² In me acriter et clamorose invectus est. (L. Epp. i. 85.)

³ Super Aristotelis et Thomæ nugis. (Ibid.)

⁴ Ne prodiret et in faciem meam spueret. (Ibid.)

⁵ Enixe sese excusavit. (Ibid.)

⁶ Cujus vellem hostes cito quamplurimos fieri. (L. Epp. i. 59.)

treated. He had touched upon it already in the Feldkirchen theses; and now he went into it more deeply. From the very commencement of Christianity there had been a controversy, more or less keen, between the two doctrines of man's freedom and subjection. Some of the schoolmen, such as Pelagius and other doctors, had taught that man possesses liberty of himself, or the capacity of loving God and doing good; this liberty Luther denied, not because he would deprive man of it, but on the contrary because he wanted to obtain it for him. The contest, then, in this great question, is not, as is commonly said, between freedom and bondage: it is between freedom coming from man and freedom coming from God. The one party, calling themselves the partisans of freedom, say to man: "You have the power to do good; you have no need for any farther freedom." The other, who are called the partisans of bondage, say to him on the contrary: "True freedom is wanting to thee, and God offers it to thee in the gospel." On the one side, freedom is spoken of, but only to perpetuate bondage; on the other, bondage is spoken of, but in order that freedom may be bestowed: such was the controversy in the time of St. Paul; in that of St. Augustine; and in that of Luther. The one party which says, "Change nothing," are the champions of bondage. The other which says, "Let your fetters fall off!" are the champions of freedom.

We should, however, deceive ourselves were we to suppose that the whole Reformation might be summed up in this important question. It is one of many doctrines which were maintained by the Wittenberg doctor—that is the whole. Above all would it be a strange illusion to suppose, that the Reformation was a fatalism—an opposition to liberty. It was a magnificent emancipation of the human mind. Bursting the numerous bonds wherewith the hierarchy had tied down man's thoughts; restoring to their due place the ideas of liberty, right, and inquiry, it set free its own age, ourselves, and our remotest posterity. Nor let it be said that although the Reformation, it is true, set man free from all human despotism, still it enslaved him by proclaiming the sovereignty of grace.¹ No doubt, it wished to bring the human will back to the divine will, fully to

¹ Optima et infallibilis ad gratiam preparatio et unica dispositio, est æterna Dei electio et prædestinatio. (L. Opp. lat. i. 56.)

subject the former to the latter, and to merge the former in the latter; but where is the philosopher who is ignorant that a full conformity to the will of God is the only, and supreme, and perfect liberty, and that man never can be truly free, until absolute righteousness and eternal truth reign in him without a rival?¹

The following are some of the ninety-nine propositions which Luther launched into the Church, in opposition to the Pelagian rationalism of the scholastic theology:

“It is true that man, who has become a corrupt tree, cannot but desire and do what is evil.

“It is false that the will, left to itself, can do good as well as evil; for it is not free but in bondage.

“It is not in the power of man’s will, to will or not to will whatever is offered to its choice.

“Man cannot of his own nature will that God should be God. He would choose rather that himself should be God, and that God should not be God.

“The best and infallible preparation, and sole disposition for grace, lies in God’s eternal election and predestination.

“It is false to say that if man does all that he can, he does away with the obstacles to grace.

“In one word, nature possesses neither right reason nor a good will.

“On the side of man there is nothing that precedes grace, unless it be impotency and rebellion.

“There is no moral virtue without pride, or without sadness, that is to say, without sin.

“From beginning to end we are not the masters of our actions, but we are their slaves.

“We do not become righteous by doing what is righteous; but having become righteous, we do what is righteous.

“He that says that a theologian who is not a logician, is an heretic and an adventurer, holds a proposition that is rash and heretical.

“There is no form of reasoning (of syllogism) that agrees with the things of God.²

¹ Breviter nec rectum dictamen habet natura nec bonam voluntatem. (L. Opp. lat. i. 56.)

Nulla forma syllogistica tenet in terminis divinis. (Ibid.)

“Could the syllogistic form be applicable to divine things, one might know the article of the Holy Trinity, and should not believe it.

“In one word, Aristotle is to theology what darkness is to light.

“Man is more the enemy of the grace of God than he is of the law itself.

“He who is without the grace of God, sins unceasingly, even although he may not kill, or steal, or commit adultery.

“He sins, for he does not keep the law spiritually.

“Not to kill, not to commit adultery, externally, and in so far as concerns actions only, is the hypocrite’s righteousness.

“God’s law and man’s will are two adversaries which cannot be brought into concord without the grace of God.¹

“What the law wills, the will of man never wills, notwithstanding that fear or affection may make it assume the semblance of willing it.

“The law is the taskmaster of the will, overcome only by the Child which is born to us.² (Isa. ix. 6.)

“The law makes sin to abound, for it irritates and repels the will.

“But the grace of God makes righteousness to abound by Jesus Christ, who makes the law to be loved.

“All the works of the law appear good outwardly, but inwardly they are sin.

“The will, when it turns towards the law without the grace of God, does this only for the sake of its own advantage.

“Cursed are all those who do the works of the law.

“Blessed are all those who do the works of the grace of God.

“The law which is good, and in which a man has life, is the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. (Rom. v. 5.)

“Grace is not bestowed in order that work may be done oftener, and more easily, but because without grace no work can be done from love.

¹ Lex et voluntas sunt adversarii duo, sine gratia Dei implacabiles. (Ibid. 57.)

² Lex est exactor voluntatis, qui non superatur nisi per Parvulum qui natus est nobis. (Ibid.) Rendered by M. M. D’A. as if it were *quæ non*, &c., and as if it were the will that was overcome. *Superatur* perhaps might best be rendered *superseded*.—Tr.

“To love God consists in hating ourselves, and in knowing nothing out of God.”¹

Thus all the good that man can do, Luther attributes to God. The thing to be done is not to repair, or, so to speak, to patch up again, the will of man; it is necessary that there should be given to him a will altogether new. God alone could say this, for God alone is capable of accomplishing it. Such is one of the greatest and most important truths of which the human mind can be convinced.

Now, although Luther proclaimed man's impotency, he did not fall into the other extreme, for he says in the eighth thesis: “It does not thence follow that the will is of its own nature wicked, that is to say, that its nature is that of evil itself, as the Manichæans have taught.”² Man's nature was at its origin essentially good: it turned away from good, which is God, and inclined towards evil. Still, its holy and glorious origin remains, and it is capable, by the power of God, of recovering that origin. It is the business of Christianity to give it again to him. The Gospel, it is true, shows us man in a state of humiliation and impotency, but even thus he is placed between two glorious and elevated states; that which is past from which he is fallen, and that which is future to which he is called. Such is the truth: man knows it, and, little as he may reflect upon it, he easily discovers that all that is told him about his present purity, power, and glory, is but a lie in which one would cradle and lull asleep his pride.”

It was not only against the pretended goodness of the human will that in these theses Luther protested, but, farther, he aimed at putting down the pretended illumination of natural reason in respect of things divine. The doctrines of the schoolmen had, in fact, exalted man's reason as well as his will, and, as a system of theology, had in the hands of some of its doctors become nothing better fundamentally than a sort of rationalism. This may be perceived from the propositions we have quoted, and which, one might imagine, must have been aimed at the rationalism of our own days. In the theses which became the signal

¹ L. Opp. L. xvii. p. 143. et Opp. lat. i.

² Nec ideo sequitur quod sit naturaliter mala, id est natura mali, secundum Manichæos. (Ib.)

for the Reformation, Luther assailed the Church and those popular superstitions which had added indulgences, purgatory, and so many other abuses, to the Gospel; in those which we have presented to the reader, he assailed the schoolmen and the rationalism which had deprived that same Gospel of the doctrine of God's sovereignty, of his revelation, and of his grace. The Reformation attacked first rationalism, then superstition. It proclaimed what were God's prerogatives before it pruned off the excrescences that had sprung from man. It was first positive; then negative. This is what has not been sufficiently understood and acknowledged; and yet, without this, we cannot arrive at a right appreciation of that religious revolution, or duly comprehend its nature.

Be this as it may, they were very novel truths which Luther had thus energetically expressed. It would have been easy to maintain them at Wittemberg, for there his influence was predominant. But it would have been said that he had chosen an arena on which nobody could appear as his opponent, while by offering battle at another university, he would procure for them more publicity, and it was by such publicity that the Reformation was effected. He turned his eyes to Erfurt, where he had excited so much angry feeling among its divines.

Accordingly, he sent these theses to John Lange, the prior of Erfurt, writing to him as follows: "My suspense, while waiting for your decision on the paradoxes, is great,—extreme,—too great perhaps,—and full of anxiety. I strongly suspect that your theologians will consider as paradoxical, and even *kakodoxical*,¹ what can only be to me most orthodox. Tell me then, with the least possible delay, how matters stand. Pray, declare to the theological faculty, and to all, that I am ready to come to you and publicly to defend these propositions, either in the university or in the monastery." It does not appear that this challenge was accepted, the monks of Erfurt contenting themselves with letting him know that his theses had exceedingly displeased them.

But he wished to send them to another part of Germany also; and, with this view, cast his eyes on a young man who acts a

¹ Imo cacodoxa (bad doctrine) videri suspicor. (L. Epp. i. 60.)

great part in the history of the Reformation, and whom it is time to introduce to the reader.

A distinguished professor, called John Mayer, was teaching at that time at the university of Ingolstadt, in Bavaria. He was born at Eck, a village of Swabia, and was commonly called doctor Eck. Luther valued his talents and acquirements, and regarded him as a friend. He was remarkably intelligent, had read a great deal, possessed an excellent memory, and adding eloquence to learning, gave proofs of the vivacity of his genius by his gestures and his voice. In short, Eck held the same place in the south of Germany that Luther held in the north; with very different tendencies they were the two most distinctive theologians of the epoch which they characterised. Ingolstadt was almost the rival of Wittemberg, and such was the reputation of both doctors, that students flocked from all quarters to the universities where they taught, greedy to devour their lectures. They were endeared to their disciples not less by personal qualities than by learning; and as Dr. Eck's character has been assailed, we may relate the following anecdote as showing that, at least at this period of his life, his heart was not shut to generous impulses.

Among the students who had been attracted by his high reputation to Ingolstadt, there was a young man, named Urban Regius, who had been born on the borders of an Alpine lake, and whose first place of study was the university of Fribourg, in Brisgau. On arriving at Ingolstadt, to which Dr. Eck's fame had brought him, Urban attended his course of philosophy and gained his good will. As he had to procure for himself the means of subsistence, he was under the necessity of taking charge of some young noblemen, who proved so expensive in their fondness for costly dresses and good cheer, that Regius was thrown into embarrassments which led him to beseech their parents to recall them. "Do not be afraid," was the reply; but still his debts increased, his creditors pressed him, and he knew not how to act. The emperor was then assembling an army against the Turks, a recruiting party had reached Ingolstadt, and while thus at his wits end, Urban enlisted. At the final review, previous to their leaving the place, he appeared in the ranks in his new soldier's uniform. At that moment Dr. Eck appeared

on the spot with several of his colleagues, and was surprised to recognize his student in the ranks of the recruits. "Urban Regius!" said he to him, eyeing him at the same time with a keen glance. "Here I am," replied the recruit. "Pray, how comes this change about?" The youth told his story. "Leave that matter to me," replied Eck; at the same time taking his pike from the young soldier, and procuring his discharge. The parents of the young spendthrifts, on being threatened by the doctor with the prince's disfavour, sent the money required to pay their children's expenses, and Urban was delivered in order to become, at a subsequent period, one of the props of the Reformation.

It was upon Eck that Luther turned his thoughts, as the person through whom he might make known his theses on Pelagianism and scholastic Rationalism, in the south of the empire. Instead, however, of sending them directly to the Ingolstadt professor, he addressed them to their worthy common friend, Christopher Scheurl, secretary of Nuremburg. "I send you," says he, "my propositions, wholly paradoxical and even kakistodoxical (*κακιστόδοξαι*) according to many, as they are. Show them to that most erudite and ingenious person, our dear Eck, that I may hear and see what he thinks of them."¹ Thus it was that Luther spoke at that time of Dr. Eck; such was the friendship that then united them—a friendship which it was not Luther that dissolved.

But this was not the arena on which the battle was to be fought. These theses turned perhaps on points of greater doctrinal importance than those which two years afterwards threw the Church into a flame; nevertheless, in spite of Luther's challenges, they passed off unnoticed. At the very most, they were read only within the limits of the Church, and beyond these made no sensation whatever. This was because they were regarded as nothing more than university propositions and doctrines in theology; while the theses which followed, bore upon an evil that had grown into bulk in the midst of the people, and was at that time forcing its way into all parts of Germany. As long as Luther only revived forgotten doctrines, none seemed to

¹ *Eccio nostro, eruditissimo et ingeniosissimo viro exhibete, ut audiam et videam quid vocet illas.* (L. Epp. i. p. 63.)

care. When he signaled out abuses which gave offence to the whole world, all gave heed.

Nevertheless, in neither case did Luther propose to himself anything beyond merely exciting one of those theological discussions which were at that time so frequent at university seats. Within this circle his thoughts were confined, and he had no idea of becoming a reformer. He was humble, and his humility went the length of diffidence and anxiety. "Considering my ignorance," he would say, "I deserve only to be hid in a corner, unknown to all men under the sun."¹ But from this corner in which he would fain have remained unknown to the world, a powerful hand withdrew him. An incident altogether independent of Luther's own will, threw him into the battle-field, and war commenced. It is this providential incident which, following the order of events, we have now to relate.

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xviii. 1944.

BOOK THIRD.

THE INDULGENCES AND THE THESES.

1517. — MAY, 1518.

1. PEOPLE throughout Germany were at this time in a state of great agitation. The Church had opened a vast market on the earth; and what with the crowds of customers, and the cries and jests of the salesmen, it might have been called a fair, but a fair held by monks. The merchandize which they cried up and offered at reduced prices, was no less, they said, than the salvation of souls.

The merchants traversed the country in a handsome equipage, accompanied by three troopers, at a rapid pace, and living very expensively. One would have said that it was some lord cardinal on an inspection tour, with his attendants and officers, and not a vulgar huckster or begging friar. On the train approaching a city, a deputation was sent to the chief magistrate with this message: "The grace of God and of the holy Father is at your gates." Forthwith the whole place was put in movement. Clergy, priests, nuns, the council, schoolmasters, scholars, trades' corporations, men and women, young and old, went to meet the merchants, with lighted tapers in their hands, marching to the sound of music, and with all the steeple bells in full swing, in such a manner," says an historian, "that a grander reception could not have been given to God himself." When the greetings were over, the whole train proceeded towards the church, headed by the pope's bull of grace, which was borne on a cushion of velvet or of cloth of gold. Next followed the leader of the traders in indulgences, with a large wooden cross in his hands. Thus did the whole procession pace along, amid chanting, and



prayers, and the smoke of sweet perfumes. The salesman monk and his party were saluted as they entered the church, with a storm of music from the organ and human voices; the large red cross was placed before the altar, with the pope's arms suspended from it; and during the whole time of its being there, the clergy of the place, the penitenciarics, and the sub-commissioners, came daily, after vespers or before the salute, to pay their respects to it, each with a white wand in his hand.¹ This great affair created a vast sensation among the quiet cities of Germany.

One personage, in particular, drew all eyes upon him at these sales; the man who carried the red cross, and who was charged with the principal part of the business. He put himself arrogantly forward in the dress of the Dominicans, and albeit he had reached the age of seventy-three, his voice was remarkably powerful, and he seemed strong and vigorous.² This person was the son of a Leipsick goldsmith, called Diez, and was himself called John Diezel or Tetzal. He had studied in his native town, was created a bachelor in 1487, and two years after entered the order of Dominicans. Numerous honours had accumulated upon him. Bachelor in theology, prior of the Dominicans, apostolic commissioner, inquisitor, *hereticæ pravitatis inquisitor*, and since 1502, uninterruptedly employed in the functions of merchant of indulgences, he had acquired so much expertness in subordinate departments, as at last to have been appointed chief commissioner. He had a monthly allowance of eighty florins, all his expenses were paid, and he was provided with a carriage and three horses; but we may well believe that his by-gains far exceeded his regular emoluments. At Freiberg, in 1507, he made two thousand florins in two days. And if his occupation was that of a knave, no less was he one in his manners. Convicted of adultery and other infamous conduct, he was about to expiate his crimes by death; the emperor Maximilian had given orders for his being put into a sack and thrown into the river, and from this fate he was saved only through the intervention of the elector Frederick of Saxony.³ But the

¹ Mit weissen Stäblein. (Archbishop of Maintz's instructions to the sub-commissioners of the indulgence, &c. art. 8.)

² Ingenio ferox et corpore robustus. (Cochl. 5.)

³ Welchen Churfürst Friederich vom Sack zu Inspruck erbeten hatte. (Mathes. 10.)

lesson he thus received was far from teaching him modesty. He took two of his children along with him—a fact mentioned by Miltitz, the papal legate, in one of his letters.¹ It would have been difficult to find in all the monasteries of Germany, a man better fitted for the trade with which he was entrusted. To the theology of a monk, and the zeal and sharp wits of an inquisitor, he added consummate effrontery; and what particularly facilitated the task he had in hand, he possessed the art of inventing those odd stories which take the fancies of the people. All methods were held to be good, provided they went to fill his money chest. Raising his voice to its loudest pitch and indulging in the eloquence of a mountebank's stage, he offered his indulgences to all, and could beat any huckster at a fair in crying up his merchandize.²

On the cross being set up and the pope's arms suspended from it, Tetzel mounted the pulpit, and, with an air of the utmost assurance, began to exalt the value of the indulgence, in presence of the crowd that had been attracted to the church by the ceremony. The people listened and stared at hearing the wonderful virtues he announced. Speaking of the Dominican friars with whom Tetzel was associated, a Jesuit historian says: "Some of these preachers scrupled not, as an ordinary practice, to outrage the subject of their discourses and to exaggerate the value of the indulgences, in such sort as to lead the people to believe that no sooner was the money paid than salvation, and the deliverance of souls from purgatory, might safely be reckoned upon."³ If such were the disciples, we may imagine what the master must have been. Let us turn to one of the harangues he delivered after the setting up of the cross.

"Indulgences," says he, "are the most precious and the sublimest gift of God.

"That cross (pointing to the red cross) has no less efficacy than the very cross of Jesus Christ."⁴

"Come forward and I will give you sealed letters, in virtue

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xv., 862.

² *Circumferuntur venales indulgentiæ in his regionibus a Tecelio Dominicano impudentissimo Sycophanta.* (Melancht. Vita Luth.)

³ History of Lutheranism by Father Maimbourg, of the company of Jesus, 1681, p. 21.

⁴ L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1393.

of which even the sins which you may have a wish to commit in future, will all be forgiven you.

"I would not exchange privileges with St. Peter in heaven : for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the apostle ever did by his preaching.

"There is no sin so great but that the indulgence may procure its remission ; nay, should any one, an impossibility no doubt, have done violence to the holy Virgin Mary, mother of God, let him but pay and it will be forgiven him.¹

"Even repentance is unnecessary.

"But more than this: the indulgences save not only the living; they save also the dead.

"Priest! nobleman! merchant! woman! youths of both sexes! hark how your parents and other friends who have died, call to you from the depth of the abyss: 'We are suffering a horrible martyrdom! A small sum, given us as alms, will deliver us; it is in your power to bestow this, and yet you will not!'"

People shuddered at hearing these words uttered by this swindling monk.

"The very instant," continued Tetzel, "that the money chinks at the bottom of the strong box, the soul escapes from purgatory and soars to heaven.²

"O weak people, and little better than the beasts, who do not comprehend the grace richly offered you! . . . Now is heaven everywhere open? . . . Dost thou hesitate to enter forthwith? . . . When wilt thou then enter? . . . Thou hast it now in thy power to deliver so many souls! . . . Hard-hearted and neglectful man! For twelve groschen thou canst deliver thy father out of purgatory, and thou art ungrateful enough not to save him! I shall be justified at the day of judgment; but as for you, you shall be punished so much the more severely for having neglected so great a salvation.—I tell you, that had you but one coat, you ought to take it off and sell

¹ Tetzel defends and maintains this assertion in his anti-theses, published that same year; Th. 99, 100 and 101. Sub commissariis insuper ac prædicatoribus veniarum imponere, ut si quis per impossibile Dei genetricem semper virginem violasset, quod eundem indulgentiarum vigore absolvere possent, luce clarius est. (Positiones fratris J. Tetzeli quibus defendit indulgentias contra Lutherum.)

² These 56. (Positiones, &c. ut supra.)

it, in order that you may obtain this favour. . . . The Lord our God is no longer God. He has committed all power to the Pope."

Then, endeavouring to make use of yet other weapons, he would add: "Know you wherefore our most holy Lord distributes this grace among you? It is intended that the ruined church of St. Peter and St. Paul should be rebuilt, in such fashion that there shall be nothing like it in the universe. That church contains the bodies of the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, and of a multitude of martyrs. These holy bodies, in consequence of the present state of the building, are now, alas!

. . . continually knocked about, put under water, soiled, dishonoured, and reduced to rottenness by the rain and by the hail. . . . Ah, shall these sacred ashes remain any longer in mud and in disgrace."¹

This representation failed not to impress many. People felt a burning eagerness to come to the help of poor Leo X. who had not wherewithal to shelter from the rain, the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul.

The speaker then declaimed against those cavillers and traitors who opposed his work. "I declare them excommunicated," said he.

Next, addressing himself to docile souls, and impiously quoting Scripture, he said: "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see; for I tell you, that many prophets, and many kings, have desired to see the things you see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them." And at the close, showing the strong box in which he received the money, he usually concluded his pathetic discourse by repeating the following appeal to the people thrice: "Bring! bring! bring!" "uttering these words," says Luther, "with such a horrible bellowing that one would have said it was an infuriated ox which had broken in among the people and was butting at them with its horns."² When his discourse was finished, he left the pulpit, ran towards the box, and in the sight of all the people, threw in a piece of money, which he took care should sound loud.³

¹ Instruction by the archbishop of Mayence, &c.

² Resolut. on the 32d Thesis.

³ Tenzel, Reformationsgesch.—Myconii Ref. His.—Archbishop of Maintz's Instruction to the Subcommissaries of Indulgences.—Luther's Theses.

Such were the pulpit addresses which astonished Germany was in course of hearing, in the days when God was preparing Luther for his task.¹

As soon as the discourse was finished, the indulgence was considered as "having solemnly established its throne in the place." Confessionals, ornamented with the pope's arms, were disposed in order. The subcommissioners, and the confessors whom they selected, were regarded as representing the apostolic penitenciaries of Rome during the season of a grand jubilee; and on each of their confession boxes were inscribed, in large characters, their names, Christian names, and titles.²

The people then pressed in crowds to these confessionals and entered them, not with contrite hearts, but with a piece of money in their hand. Men and women, children, poor people even down to such as lived upon alms, every one found his piece of money. After explaining the greatness of the indulgence to each in particular, the penitenciaries put this question to the penitents: "Tell me, on your conscience, how much money you can give away, in order that you may obtain so complete a pardon?" "This question," says the archbishop of Maintz's instructions to the commissioners, "ought to be put at that moment, so that the penitents may be the better disposed to contribute."

As for the rest, this was all the good disposition that was required. Mention at least was made in the pope's bull of repentance of heart and confession by the mouth; but Tetzels and his gang took good care not to speak of these, as otherwise their money-bank would have remained empty. The archi-episcopal instructions forbade them so much as to speak of conversion or contrition. Three grand favours were promised, of which we need mention only the first. "The first favour we have to announce to you," said the commissioners according to the letter of their instructions, "is the complete pardon of all sins, and a greater favour than this cannot be named, in as much as a man who lives in sin forfeits the divine favour, and as by this complete forgive-

¹ And these discourses, nay, this whole impious traffic, were matters of public notoriety; and the traffic was carried on by a commission from the archbishop and in the name of the pope? Where now the papal infallibility which at least tacitly approves of all this? Must not every one who uses his reason here side with Luther, yea, with the first as the best, who showed courage enough to oppose such ungodly presumption?—L. R.

² Instruction, etc. 5, 69.

ness, he obtains anew the grace of God.¹ Now, we declare, that in order to the obtaining of these excellent favours, all that is required is the purchase of an indulgence.² And as for those who would deliver souls from purgatory, and procure the forgiveness of all their offences, let them but put the money into the box; but neither repentance of heart nor confession of mouth is required of them.³ Let them only make haste and bring their money, for thereby they will do what is most beneficial to the souls of the defunct and to the building of St. Peter's Church." Greater benefits could not be purchased at a lower price.

When the confession was over, and it was soon made, the faithful hastened to the salesman. The sale was committed to a single person who kept his counter near the cross. He keenly scrutinized all who came to him, marking their expression, their bearing, and their clothes; and from each he asked a sum corresponding to their respective appearances as they presented themselves. Kings, queens, princes, archbishops, and bishops, were bound, according to the regulations, to pay five and twenty ducats for one ordinary indulgence. Abbots, counts, and barons, had to pay ten. Other nobles, rectors, and all persons having an income of five hundred florins, paid six ducats. Those who had two hundred florins a year, paid one; others only a half. Further, if the tax could not be literally complied with, ample discretionary powers were given to the apostolic commissioner, and the whole was to be arranged according to the dictates "of sound reason" and the donor's generosity.⁴ For particular sins Tetzl had a particular tariff. Thus polygamy paid six ducats; stealing from a church and perjury, nine ducats; murder, eight ducats; magic, two ducats. Samson who carried on the same trade in Switzerland as Tetzl in Germany, had a somewhat different tax. For child-murder he exacted four livres tournois; for the murder of a father or brother, one ducat.⁵

The apostolic commissioners had difficulties occasionally to encounter in carrying on their business. It often happened, both in cities and in the villages, that married men were opposed to this whole traffic, and forbade their wives taking anything to

¹ Die erste Gnade ist die Vollkommene Vergebung aller Sünden. &c. (Instruction, 19.) ² Nur den Beichtbrief zu kaufen. (Ibid., 36.)

³ Auch ist nicht nöthig dass sie in dem Herzen Zerknirschung sind, und mit dem Mund gebeichtet haben. (Ibid. 38.)

⁴ Nach den Sätzen der gesunden Vernunft, nach ihrer Magnificenz und Freigebigkeit. (Ibid., etc. 26.) ⁵ Muller's Reliquien, iii. p. 264.

these merchants. What course could their devout spouses follow? "Have you not your dowry, or some other means at your disposal?" said the salesmen. "In that case, you may dispose of them for so holy a work, even against the wishes of your husbands."¹

The hand that granted the indulgence could not receive the money, this being forbidden under the heaviest penalties; and, indeed, there was too much reason to fear that that hand might prove unfaithful. The penitent was himself to drop the price of his forgiveness into the chest.² Those who audaciously kept their purses closed, were wrathfully frowned upon.³

If, among those who crowded to the confessionals, any one were found whose crime, though public, had not fallen under the cognizance of the laws of the state, he was bound, first of all, to do public penance. He was conducted to a chapel or sacristy; there he was stripped of his clothes; his shoes were taken from his feet, and he was left naked to the shirt. His arms were placed across his breast; a light was put into one hand, and a taper into the other. The penitent was then marched off at the head of the procession that advanced to the red cross. He threw himself on his knees, and remained thus until the chanting and the collect were over. The commissioner then thundered out the psalm, *Miserere mei!* Straightway the confessor approached the penitent, and led him across the station to the commissioner, who, taking the rod in his hand, struck him with it softly three several times on the back,⁴ uttering these words: "May God have pity on thee and forgive thy sin!" He next thundered forth the *Kyrie eleison*. The penitent was then led up to the cross, and the confessor pronounced the apostolic absolution over him, and declared him restored to his place among the faithful. Sad mummeries wound up by holy words, which at such a moment, involved a profanation.⁵

¹ Instr. 27. Wieder den Willen inres Mannes.

² Ibid. 87, 90 and 91.

³ Luth. Opp. Leipz. xvii. 79.

⁴ Dreimal gelind auf den Rücken. (Instruction.)

⁵ Yes, blasphemous words! Shame, methinks, must cover the face of any one who would allege aught as an apology for such a traffic in indulgences; and who does not perceive that a Church which, for a moment, could tolerate such traffic, must have long since lost the spirit of infallibility, if it ever could have possessed it?—L. R.

The following is one of the letters of absolution; and it is well worth our while to know the contents of these diplomas, for they were the occasion of the reform of the Church.

“May our Lord Jesus Christ have pity upon thee N. N**** and absolve thee by the merits of his most holy passion! And I, in virtue of the apostolic commission which has been committed to me, absolve thee from all ecclesiastical censures, judgments, and penalties, which thou mayest have deserved; further, from all the excesses, sins, and crimes, which thou mayest have committed, however great or enormous they may be, and extending to all cases whatever, even were they reserved to our most holy Father, the Pope, and to the apostolic see. I wipe out all the stains of inability, and all the marks of infamy, which thou mayest in that respect have drawn upon thee. I remit for thee the pains thou mightest have had to endure in purgatory. I restore thee to participation in the sacraments of the Church. I incorporate thee afresh into the communion of the saints, and I re-establish thee in the innocence and the purity in which thou wast at the time of thy baptism. So that at the moment of thy death, the gate by which souls pass into the place of pains and torments, will be shut upon thee, while, on the contrary, that which leads to the paradise of joy, will be open to thee. And if thou art not called upon to die soon, this grace will remain unalterable for the time of thy latter end.

“In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

“Friar JOHN TETZEL, commissary, has signed it with his own hand.”

How cleverly do we find presumptuous and lying words intercalated in this document, amid others that are holy and Christian! The faithful were all to come and confess themselves in the very place where the red cross was set up. To this there was no exception, save in the case of the sick, the aged, and women with child. If, however, there happened to be any nobleman residing at his castle in the neighbourhood, or some great personage in his palace, exceptions were also made for such;¹ for he might not care to mingle with the vulgar crowd,

¹ Instruction, 9.

and yet his money was well worth the trouble of going in quest of it to his house.

If there happened to be any monastery, the superiors of which, in their opposition to Tetzels traffic, prohibited their monks from paying visits to the places where the indulgence had set up its throne, a remedy was found for this by sending them confessors, empowered to absolve them in the face of the rules of their order, and the will of their superiors.¹ Not a single vein of ore was left in the mine without something being done to work it to advantage.

Then came what was the aim and end of the whole affair: the reckoning up of the coin. To ensure its safety, the chest had three keys; one remained in the hands of Tetzels; another in those of a treasurer delegated by the house of Fugger of Augsburg, which had been charged with the agency of this stupendous enterprise; the third was confided to the civil authority. When the time for doing so had arrived, the chests were opened in presence of a public notary, and the contents duly counted over and recorded. Might not Christ have been expected to return for the purpose of driving out these profane traffickers from the sanctuary?

When the mission was closed, the merchants relieved themselves of their fatigues. They were forbidden, it is true, by the instructions delivered by the commissary general, to frequent taverns and suspicious places;² but they cared little for any such interdictions. Sins must have seemed very little to be dreaded by persons who made so easy a trade in them. "The collectors," says a Roman Catholic historian, "led a bad life; they expended in taverns, at card tables, and in infamous places, all that the people had saved from their necessities."³ It was even positively asserted that when carousing in taverns, they would even stake the salvation of men's souls at dice.⁴

II. Let us now see what scenes resulted from this traffic in the forgiveness of sins, as carried on in Germany. Some of its features are sufficient of themselves to give us a picture of those times, and, in describing these, we like to allow the men whose history we are relating, to speak for themselves.

¹ Instruction 69.

² Sarpi, Concil. of Trent. p. 5.

³ Instruction 4.

⁴ Shroock, R. G. v. d. R. I. 116.

At Magdeburg, Tetzel refused to absolve a wealthy woman, unless, as he told her, she would pay him in advance an hundred florins. She sought the advice of her ordinary confessor, who was a Franciscan. "God grants the remission of sins gratuitously," was the confessor's reply; "he never sells it." Meanwhile he begged her not to inform Tetzel of the counsel that he had given her. The report of it, however, reached the merchant's ears, and in his rage at an advice so opposed to his interests, he exclaimed: "Such an adviser, people ought to banish or burn." ¹

Tetzel rarely found persons enlightened enough, and, more rarely still, persons courageous enough to resist him. Generally speaking, he made large gains of the superstitious crowd. He had put up the cross of the indulgences at Zwickau, and the good folks of the parish had hastened with all speed, to make the money which was to save their souls, chink at the bottom of the chest. He was about to leave the place with a well-filled purse, but the night before his departure, the chaplains and their acolytes came to request that he would give them a farewell entertainment. Nothing was more reasonable, but what could he do, for the money had already been counted over and put under lock and seal. The following morning he ordered the large steeple bell to be tolled; a crowd rushed to church; all thinking that something strange must have happened, as the station was over. "I had made up my mind," said he, "to leave you this morning, but I was awakened last night by groans; I listened. . . . they came from the church-yard.

. . . Alas! it was a poor soul that called on me, and besought me instantly to deliver it from the torment that was consuming it! Accordingly I have staid one day longer, that I might move Christian hearts to have compassion on this miserable soul. I desire myself to be the first to give; but whoever follows not my example will deserve condemnation." What heart could refuse to reply to such an appeal? And, besides, who was to know what soul it might be which complained from the church-yard? A liberal amount was collected, and Tetzel gave the chaplains and their acolytes a festive entertainment, the expenses of which were

¹ Scultet Annal. evangel., p. iv.

defrayed from the offerings made in behalf of the soul of the Zwickau corpse.^{1 2}

The indulgence merchants established themselves at Hagenau in 1517, and the wife of a shoemaker there, availing herself of the sanction given in the commissary general's instructions, had, in opposition to her husband's wishes, procured a letter of indulgence, for which she gave a golden florin. She died soon after, and as her husband took no measures to have mass said for the repose of her soul, the parish priest charged him before a magistrate with contempt for religion. The shoemaker was summoned to appear in court but took care to put his wife's indulgence in his pocket, before going to be examined. "Is not your wife dead?" said the magistrate. "Yes," he replied. "What have you done for her?" "I have buried her body and recommended her soul to God." "But have you seen to a mass being said for her soul's health?" "I have not done so. It could be of no use; she passed into heaven the moment that she died." "How came you to know that?" "Why here is the proof," on which, he drew the indulgence from his pocket, and there, in presence of the priest, the magistrate read, in so many words, that at the moment of her death the woman who had received it was to go, not into purgatory, but directly to heaven. "If the priest," he added, "pretend that a mass is still necessary, my wife has been deceived by our most Holy Father the Pope; if she has not been so deceived, it is the priest then that deceives me." To this there was no reply, and the accused was acquitted. Thus did the good sense of the people treat these pious frauds as they deserved.³

¹ Löschers Ref. Acta. i. 404. L. Opp. xv. 443, &c.

² How can any man of sound mind, take in hand to defend a church, and that too as the sole infallible one, where such scandalous practices have ever been admitted; and these, not occurring here and there, and committed by obscure people, but by persons commissioned by the Popes? And should it be insisted that such things have now disappeared, yet to the charge of how much ingratitude does that Church not render herself obnoxious, for perpetuating prejudices against those to whom alone she is indebted for her improvement in this respect? Much is said about impartiality, and the mutual approach of Roman Catholics and Protestants. So far well; but, first, let justice be done to those worthies who purified the R. C. Church from such acts of impiety, and who saw, and proclaimed, how far that Church stood from the infallibility that was ascribed to her. Then we shall see whether these men were led by the fervour of a holy zeal, in any respect to exceed the bounds of duty in abolishing this or that (doctrine or practice), it being good in itself, although abused.—L. R.

³ Musculi loci communes, p. 362.

One day as Tetzel was preaching at Leipsick, and was interlarding his sermon with some of the fables of which we have given a specimen, two students left the church with indignation, exclaiming: "We can no longer listen to this monk's jests and puerilities."¹ One of the two, we are assured, was the young Camerarius; afterwards the intimate friend of Melancthon, and who wrote his life.

But of all the young men of that time, the one on whom Tetzel made the deepest impression was undoubtedly Myconius, who subsequently became famous as a Reformer, and as the historian of the Reformation. He had received a Christian education. "My son," his father, a pious Franconian, would often say to him, "pray often, for all things are freely given to us by God alone. The blood of Christ," he would add, "is the sole ransom for the sins of the whole world. O my son, though there were but three men destined to be saved by the blood of Christ, believe, and believe with assurance, that thou art one of the three."² It is to put an affront on the Saviour's blood to doubt that it saves."³ Then putting his son on his guard against the traffic that was then beginning to establish itself in Germany: "the Roman indulgences," he farther said, "are nets for catching money, which serve to deceive the simple. Remission of sins and eternal life are not things to be bought."

At the age of thirteen, Frederick was sent to Annaberg

¹ Höffman's Reformationsgesch. v. Leipz. p. 32.

² Si tantum tres homines essent salvandi per sanguinem Christi, certo statueret unum se esse ex tribus illis. (Melch. Adam. Vita Mycon.)

³ Here, likewise, those Protestants have somewhat to learn, who from pure orthodoxy would take occasion to keep men's minds in doubt how far Christ has died for them; grounding this on the dogma which they ascribe to the Reformers, that Christ died for a limited number only. This may be found in their doctrines as an abstract proposition, but far different was their practice; for supposing it were known that Christ had died for three persons only, they would have had every one, be he who he might, to believe that he was one of the three. And not only was this the language of Myconius, who was one of Luther's followers, but Olevianus to whom we (the Dutch) are so far indebted for our catechetical instructions, went still farther, and in speaking of Christ's death, has said: "Thou oughtest to be so assured and certain of this, as that wert thou, poor sinner, alone in the world, as one solitary sheep, yet should Christ have left the ninety and nine, already glorified in heaven, and have come down from the heavenly glory to this nether world, to seek for thee, to bear thee on his shoulders, and to rescue thee, as he himself testifies in the gospel." See *Olevianus Over de geloofartikelen; uitgegeven door G. Zeplmans van Solm*, bl. 15. In the same spirit speak all the Reformers. How far, alas, have people declined from this, by placing orthodoxy, nay even the distinguishing characteristic of true piety, in sentiments directly opposite, deterring the mind, as much as they can, from freely appropriating the death of Christ.—L. R.

school for the completion of his studies. Tetzel soon after arrived in that city and remained there two years. People flocked in crowds to his preachings. "There is no other method," cried Tetzel with a voice of thunder, "there is no other method of obtaining everlasting life but that of works. But for man, this method of giving satisfaction is impossible. He can only purchase it, then, from the Roman pontiff."¹

When Tetzel was about to leave Annaberg, his harangues became still more urgent. Ere long he exclaimed in a threatening tone: "I will take down the cross, I will close the gate of heaven,² I will extinguish the radiance of this sun of grace which is now beaming upon you." Resuming, then, the soft tones of exhortation: "Behold," said he, "the day of salvation; behold the favourable time!" Pausing his voice anew, this pontifical Stentor,³ who was addressing the inhabitants of a country the source of whose riches lay in mines, roared out, "Bring, ye burgesses of Annaberg, bring ample contributions for the indulgences, and your mines and mountains shall be filled with pure silver!" Finally, when Whitsuntide came, he declared that he would distribute his letters to the poor gratuitously and for the love of God.

Young Myconius was of the number of Tetzel's hearers, and felt much inclined to take advantage of this offer. Addressing himself in Latin to the commissioners to whom he had gone to make a personal application; "I am a poor sinner," said he, "and I require a free pardon."—"Those only," replied the merchants, "can share in Christ's merits who hold out helping hands to the church, that is to say, who give money."—"What mean then," said Myconius, "those promises of free pardon, placarded on the doors and the walls of the churches?"—"Give a groschen at least," said Tetzel's people after having vainly interceded for the young man with their master.—"No, I cannot."—"Sixpence then?"—"I have not even that."—On this the Dominicans began to suspect that he had come to entrap them. "Hark now," they said, "we will make you a present of sixpence."—Indignant at this, the young man, raising his voice, replied,

¹ Si nummis redimatur a pontifice romano. (Melch. Adam.)

² Clausuram januam cœli. (Ib.)

Stentor pontificius. (Ib.)

"I have no desire for indulgences that must be bought. Did I want to buy them, I should only have to sell one of my school books. What I want is a pardon given gratuitously and for the love of God alone. You have now to answer to God for having allowed a soul's salvation to be lost for want of sixpence."—"Who has sent you to entrap us," said the merchants.—"Nothing but the desire of receiving God's favour has led me to appear in the presence of such great lords," replied the youth and withdrew.

"I was much cast down," says he, "at being thus pitilessly dismissed. Still I felt within me a comforter who told me that there was a God in heaven who forgave sins, without money and without price, to penitent souls, for the love of his Son Jesus Christ. As I was taking leave of these people the Holy Ghost touched my heart. I burst into tears and besought the Lord with sobs. "O God," I cried, "since men have refused me the remission of my sins because I have no money to pay for it, do thou, Lord, take pity upon me, and grant me remission out of pure favour. I betook myself to my room, laid hold of my crucifix as it lay on my desk, placed it on a chair, and fell on my knees before it. I cannot tell you what were my feelings. I besought God to be a Father to me, and to do with me whatever he chose. I felt that my nature was changed, converted, and transformed. What before had delighted me, thenceforth became an object of disgust. To live with God, and to please him, was thenceforth my most ardent, my only desire."¹

Thus did Tetzel pave the way for the Reformation. By crying abuses he cleared a path towards a purer doctrine, and the indignation he roused among generous youths was one day to be powerfully manifested. One may judge of this by the following anecdote.

A Saxon gentleman who had heard Tetzel at Leipsick, had felt this indignation at his falsehoods. Going to the monk, he asked him if he were empowered to forgive the sins which a man might intend to commit. "Assuredly yes," replied Tetzel, "I have received full powers to that effect from the Pope." "Very well," answered the knight, "I have a mind to indulge myself in

¹ Letter from Myconius to Eberus in *Hechtii Vita Tetzeli Wittemb.* p. 114.

a little revenge at the expense of one of my enemies without attacking his life. I will give you ten crowns, if you will give me in return a letter of indulgence fully justifying me in doing so." Tetzel started some difficulties: but they came to an understanding at last, that the thing should be done for thirty crowns. Not long after the monk left Leipsick, the gentleman attended by his servants, lies in wait for him in a wood between Jüterbock and Treblin; falls upon him, gives him a slight drubbing with his cane, and makes off with the rich indulgence box which the inquisitor was taking along with him. Tetzel raised the hue and cry that he had been robbed, and complained to the courts of justice. But the gentleman produced the letter signed by Tetzel himself, and by anticipation exempting him from all punishment. Duke George, though at first very angry at what had been done, as soon as he saw the document, gave orders for the accused to be discharged as innocent.¹

This traffic now set all men's minds in motion and was talked of every where. It became the topic of conversation at the residences of the nobility, in the academies, in the burgher's houses, in inns, in ale houses, and, in short, wherever the people chanced to meet.² Opinions were divided about it; some believed; others were indignant; but the sound part of the nation rejected this system of indulgences with disgust. So contrary was that doctrine to Holy Scripture and good morals, that all who had any acquaintance with the Bible, or any natural light in them, in their own minds condemned it, and but waited the signal for opposing it. On the other hand, scorners found ample matter for raillery. The common people, after long years of irritation at the bad conduct of the priests, and induced by the dread of punishment alone to show them any measure of respect, now gave free vent to their hatred. Every where complaints and sneers were heard on the love of money by which the clergy were eaten up.

Not confining themselves to this, people attacked the power of the keys and the authority of the sovereign pontiff. "Why does not the pope," it was said, "deliver all souls from purgatory

¹ Albinus. Meissn. Chronik. L. W. (W.) xv 446; &c. Hechtius in Vit. Tetzeli.

- Luth. Opp. (Leipz.) xvii. p. 111 and 116.

at once, from a principle of sacred charity, and because of the great misery of these souls, since he delivers so many for the sake of the money that perishes, and for St. Peter's cathedral? Why is there a continual celebration of feasts and anniversaries for the dead? Why does the pope not restore, or allow to be taken back, the church livings and prebends that have been founded for the dead, since it is now useless, and even reprehensible, to pray for those who have been delivered for all time coming by the indulgences? What, then, is this new holiness of God and the pope, bestowed for the sake of money on a man who is impious and God's enemy, so that he delivers from purgatory a soul that is pious and beloved of the Lord, instead of themselves delivering such a soul gratuitously, from love, and because of its great misery.¹

Stories were told of the gross and immoral conduct of those who conducted the trade in indulgences. It was said that in paying the postmasters who conveyed them and their wares, the innkeepers at whose houses they lodged, in short, all who rendered them any service, they gave a letter of indulgence for four souls, five souls, or so many more souls, as the case might be. Thus certificates of salvation began to circulate in the hosteleries and at markets, like bank notes or like paper money. "Bring, bring," said the common people, "such is the head, belly, tail, and entire contents of their sermons."²

A Schneeberg miner happened to meet with one of the sellers of indulgences. "Are we to put faith," said he, "in what you have so often told us of the efficacy of indulgences and of the authority of the pope, and to believe that by throwing a penny into the chest, we may rescue a soul from purgatory?" The indulgence-monger said that such was the case. "Ah," replied the miner, "what a pitiless man must the pope then be, in that for the sake of a wretched penny, he should suffer a poor soul to lament so long in the flames! If he have no ready money, let him collect some hundred thousand crowns and deliver all the souls at once. We poor people will willingly pay both interest and capital."

Thus Germany was tired of the shameless traffic that was

¹ Luther theses on the indulgences. Th. 82, 83, and 84.

² L. Opp. (Leipz.) xvii. 79.



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going on in its territories, and people could no longer tolerate the impostures of these adepts in knavery from Rome, ¹ as Luther says. Nevertheless, no bishop, no theologian, dared to oppose their knavery and their frauds. Men's minds remained in suspense, wondering if God would raise up any man of sufficient might for the work that he had to accomplish; but no such person was to be seen.

III. The pontiff's throne was now filled, not by a Borgia, but by Leo X., of the illustrious family of the Medicis. As a man, Leo was able, candid, remarkably good natured, and of a mild disposition. In his intercourse with other men he was affable, in his liberality unbounded; but his private morals, though superior to those of his court, are admitted by Pallavicini to have been not altogether without reproach. To this amiable character he added several of the qualities of a great prince. He was the friend of the sciences and arts; he had the earliest Italian comedies acted in his presence; and, indeed, there were few in existence at that time which he had not seen acted. He was passionately fond of music also, so that his palace daily resounded with the playing of instruments, and he was often heard humming over tunes that had been performed in his presence. He was fond of magnificence, and spared no expense when required for festivities, games, theatricals, and rewards, and presents. The supreme pontiff's court was exceeded by none, either in splendour or in pleasure. Nay, on its being understood that Julian Medicis thought of establishing his residence at Rome with his young wife: "praise be to God," exclaimed Cardinal Bibbiana, Leo X's. most influential counsellor, "for we were in want of nothing but a court of ladies."² The court of the pope was not considered as complete, until one in which ladies could appear was superadded. To religious feelings Leo X. was an utter stranger. Sarpi says of him, that his manners were so pleasing that he would have been quite an accomplished person, had he but possessed some knowledge of religious matters

¹ Fessicrant Germani omnes, ferendis explicationibus, nundinationibus, et infinitis imposturis Romanensium nebulonum. (L. Opp. lat. in præf.)

² Ranke Römische Pabste, i. 71.

³ Concile de Trente, p. 4. Pallavicini, while pretending to refute Sarpi, confirms and even aggravates his testimony. Suo plane officio defuit. (Leo). . . . venationes, facetias, pompas adeo frequentes. . . . (Concil. Trid. Hist. i. p. 8, 9.)

and a little more inclination to piety, about which he never much troubled himself.

Leo required a great deal of money. He had to provide for his vast ordinary expenditure, to find means for indulging all his liberalities, to fill the purse of golden pieces which he daily threw among the people, to keep up the licentious shows of the Vatican, to satisfy the many calls of his relations and of his courtiers, persons devoted to voluptuousness, to endow his sister, who had been married to prince Cibo, natural son of Pope Innocent VIII., and to meet the expenses occasioned by his taste for literature, the arts, and other personal gratifications. His cousin, Cardinal Pulchi, who was no less expert in amassing wealth than Leo was in lavishing it away, recommended him to avail himself of the resource to be found in indulgences. The pope, accordingly, published a bull announcing a general indulgence, the produce of which was destined, he said, to the building of that monument of priestly magnificence, (St. Peter's church.) In a letter given at Rome, under the fisherman's ring, in Nov., 1517, Leo requires 147 golden ducats from his commissioner for indulgences, this sum being to pay for a manuscript of the thirty-third book of Livy. No doubt, of all the purposes to which he applied the money he obtained from the Germans, this was the best; still it was strange that souls should be rescued from purgatory, in order that a purchase might be made of the history of the Roman people's wars.

There was at that time in Germany a young prince who in many respects was the living image of Leo X. This was Albert, a younger brother of the elector Joachim of Brandenburg, and who first, at the age of four and twenty, had been created archbishop and elector of Maintz and Magdeburg, and, two years after, was appointed a cardinal. Albert had neither the virtues nor the vices often met with among the high dignitaries of the Church. Young, volatile, and worldly, but not without some generous feelings, he very clearly perceived several of the abuses of catholicity, and cared little for the fanatical monks that surrounded him. His candour led him to acknowledge, in part at least, the justice of the claims made by the friends of the Gospel. In his own secret heart he was not very much opposed to Luther. One of the most distinguished among

the Reformers, Capito, was long his chaplain, adviser, and most intimate friend. Albert regularly attended when he preached. He did not despise the Gospel," says Capito; "on the other hand he had a great esteem for it, and for long he prevented the monks from attacking Luther." But he had wished that the latter should not compromise him, and that while he pointed out errors in doctrine, and exposed the vices of the lower orders of the clergy, he should be careful not to throw light on the faults of bishops and princes. He dreaded above all things, seeing his name mixed up with that affair. The confiding Capito, apt to be deluded, as people often allow themselves to be when placed in a like position, some time after this bade Luther "look to the example of Jesus Christ and of his apostles; they reprehended the pharisees, and the incestuous person at Corinth; but they never named the guilty. You know not what passes in the heart of bishops. There is more good to be found in these than you imagine." But Albert's volatile and profane spirit did even more to estrange him from the Reformation than was done by the susceptibilities and the fears of his selfishness. Affable, witty, handsome, sumptuous, dissipated, delighting in the gratifications of the table, in rich equipages, in the magnificence of fine buildings, in licentious pleasures, and in the society of men of letters, this archbishop-elect was in Germany what Leo X. was in Rome. His court was one of the most magnificent in the empire. To his passion for whatever was pleasing or grand, he was ready to sacrifice all the presentiments of truth that might have found their way into his heart. Nevertheless to the last, there might be seen in him, a certain resistance arising from his better convictions, and on more than one occasion he gave proofs of his moderation and his candour.

Albert, as well as Leo, was in want of money, and he had obtained advances from those rich Augsburg merchants, the Fuggers. These debts he behoved to pay, and notwithstanding that he had accumulated in his own person two archbishopricks and a bishoprick, he had not wherewithal to pay for his pallium. That ornament of white wool, spotted with black crosses and blessed by the Pope, was sent to the archbishops as a mark of their dignity, and cost them 26,000, some say 30,000 florins.

Albert, in his endeavours to obtain money, very naturally thought of having recourse to the same means as those employed by the pope. He craved of him the general farming of the indulgences, or, as was said at Rome, of the sins of the Germans.

These the popes sometimes managed themselves; at other times they farmed them as, at this day, certain governments farm out gambling houses. Albert made an offer to Leo to share with him in the profits of the speculation; and in accepting it, Leo insisted that the price of the pallium should be immediately paid. Albert, who reckoned precisely on the indulgences as a means of payment, applied anew to the Fuggers, who thinking it might turn out a good job, advanced what was required on certain conditions, and were appointed treasurers to the scheme. At that time they were the bankers of the princes, and in reward of their services were subsequently made counts.

The Pope and the archbishop having thus shared between them the anticipated spoils of the good souls of Germany, persons were next to be found to whom they might commit the management of the concern. It was first offered to the order of the monks of St. Francis, and their guardian was conjoined with Albert. But those monks did not like to meddle with it, as it was already in bad odour with all honest people. The Augustinian friars, among whom there was more enlightened sentiment than in any other of the religious orders, cared still less about having anything to do with it. Meanwhile the Franciscans dreaded the pope's displeasure, after his having sent their general, de Forli, a cardinal's hat; a hat which cost that poor begging order 30,000 florins. Their guardian did not deem a direct refusal prudent, but he threw all sorts of difficulties in Albert's way. Never being able to come to a mutual understanding, the elector eagerly accepted the proposal made to him that he should have the entire management. The Dominican friars, on their side, coveted a share in the general system of trading that was about to commence. Tetzels, who had already gained reputation in the craft, flew to Maintz with an offer of his services to the elector. The talents he had displayed in publishing indulgences for the knights of the Teutonic order of Prussia and Livonia,

were now remembered; his proposals were accepted, and this whole traffic accordingly passed into the hands of his order.¹

IV. In so far as can now be ascertained, Luther heard Tetzel spoken of first at Grimma, in 1516, just as he had commenced his visitation of the churches. Word was brought to Staupitz, who was still with Luther, that there was at Würzen a merchant of indulgences called Tetzel, and that he was making a great noise. Some even of his extravagant assertions were reported, on hearing which, Luther, in great indignation, exclaimed: "If God permit, I will knock a hole in his drum."²

It was on returning from Berlin, where he had met with the most friendly reception from the elector Joachim, the farmer-general's brother, that Tetzel established himself at Jüterbock. Staupitz, availing himself of the confidence with which the elector Frederick always treated him, had often represented to him the abuses of the indulgences,³ and the scandals committed by those who sought money for them. The princes of Saxony, in their indignation at this shameless traffic, had interdicted the man who conducted it from entering their provinces, so that he had to confine himself to the territories of his patron the archbishop of Magdeburg; still, however, approaching as near as possible to Saxony. Jüterbock was, indeed, only four miles from Wittenberg. "This grand purse-thrasher,"⁴ said Luther, "set himself bravely to beat the country, so that money began to jump and drop again with a clinking sound to the bottom of the money chests." The people ran in crowds from Wittenberg to the indulgence market at Jüterbock.

Luther, at this period, was still abundantly given to pay respect to the Church and the pope. "I was then," says he, "both as a monk and a papist, one of the most insensate of men; so intoxicated with the doctrines of Rome, and even so drowned in them, that I would have willingly assisted, had I had it in my power, in killing any one who had the audacity to refuse in the smallest matter to obey the pope."⁵ I was truly a

¹ Seckendorf, 42.

² Lingke, Reise-gesch. Luther's, p. 27.

³ Instillans ejus pectori frequentes indulgentiarum abusos. (Cochlæus, 4.)

⁴ In German, to thresh, dreschen. (Luther's Opp. xvii.)

⁵ Monachum, et papi-stam insanissimum, ita ebrium, imo submersum in dogmatibus papæ, etc. In præf. Opp. Witt. i.

Saul, as many still be." His heart, nevertheless, was ready to consume itself with its zeal for whatever he saw to be the truth, and against whatever he believed to be error. "I was a young doctor who had just come glowing from the forge, and was ardent and rejoicing in the Word of the Lord."¹

Luther was seated one day in the confessional at Wittemberg, when several of the burgesses of that city came, one after another, confessing themselves guilty of great disorders. Adultery, loose living, usury, ill-gotten gains,—such were the offences with which the minister of the Word was informed by souls of which he was one day to render an account. He reproved, and corrected, and instructed. But what was his astonishment to find the people reply, that they had no wish to give up their sins! . . . The pious monk was horrified. He told them that as they would not promise conversion, he could not grant absolution. The wretched creatures, on this, appealed to their letters of indulgences; these they exhibited, and insisted that they were entitled to take the benefit of them. But Luther replied that he made little account of the bits of paper they showed him, and added: *If ye repent not, ye shall all perish*. The people exclaim against this and protest, but the doctor is not to be shaken: they must cease to do evil, they must learn to do well, otherwise there can be no absolution. "Beware," he adds, "of the clamours of those who sell indulgences: you have better things to attend to than to be buying these licenses which they sell to you for the vilest price."²

In great alarm at this reception, these inhabitants of Wittemberg hastened back to Tetzl, and told him that an Augustinian monk made no account of his letters. On hearing this, Tetzl grew red with rage. He thundered forth insults and curses³ from the pulpit, and the better to strike terror into the people, he repeatedly had a fire kindled on the market place, declaring that he had the pope's orders to burn all heretics who should dare to say a word against the most holy indulgences.

Such were the circumstances which were the first occasion,

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xxii.

² Cœpi dissuadere populis et eos dehortari ne indulgentiariorum clamoribus aurem præberent. . . . (L. Opp. lat. in præf.)

³ Wütet, schilt und maledoit græulich auf dem Predigtstuhl. (Myconius Reformationgesch.)

though not the original cause, of the Reformation. We behold a pastor endeavouring to withdraw the sheep of his flock from a path which was leading them to destruction.¹ As yet he has no thoughts of reforming the Church or the world; and though he had seen Rome, and been an eye-witness of its corruptions, he makes no attack upon Rome. Some of the abuses under which Christendom was groaning have begun to affect his sentiments, yet these abuses he has no thoughts of correcting. He has no wish to make himself a reformer, and has no more any plan for a reformation of the Church than he has one for himself. It was God's will that there should be reform, and Luther for that reform. The same remedy that had been found so efficacious for the cure of Luther's woes, the hand of God was to administer to the woes of Christendom. Luther calmly remains within the sphere assigned to him, simply following where his Master calls. We see him now at Wittenberg, discharging the duties of professor, preacher, and pastor; we behold him seated in church, while the members of his flock come to open their hearts to him. It is there—it is on that field, that evil makes its attack on him, and that error comes to seek him out. An attempt is made to hinder him from discharging his duty; his conscience, bound to the Word of God, is aroused, and he feels that it is God who addresses him. To resist he sees to be his duty, and it must therefore be likewise his right. He ought to speak out. Thus were events ordained by that God who desired to restore Christendom by the instrumentality of a forge-master's son; whose will it was, as Mathesius says, that the impure doctrine of the Church should pass through his furnaces, in order that it might be purified.²

After having said thus much, it will no doubt seem unnecessary to refute a mendacious imputation, invented by some of Luther's enemies, but not until after his death. Jealousy for his order, it has been said, and vexation at finding a shameless and reprobate traffic confided to the Dominicans, rather than to the Augustinians,³ who up to that time had been in possession

¹ *Hæc initia fuerunt hujus controversiæ, in quâ Lutherus, nihil adhuc suspiciens aut somniens de futura mutatione rituum.* (Melanct. Vita Luth.)

² *Die verseurté Lehr durch den Ofen gehen.* (p. 10.)

³ *Falsum est consuevisse hoc munus injungi Eremitanis S. Augustini.* . . . (p. 14.)

of it, led the Wittenberg doctor to attack Tetzel and his doctrines. The fact once established, that the trade had been offered to the Franciscans first, who would have nothing to do with it, sufficiently refutes this fable, which has been often repeated by authors copying from each other. Besides, we have seen what had been the workings of Luther's soul, and they fully explain his conduct. He felt bound frankly to confess the doctrine to which he owed his happiness. In Christianity whatever good a man has found for himself, he desires to communicate to others. Such explanations are abandoned by the men of our days, as childish and unworthy of the grand revolution of the sixteenth century. It is pretended that we must try to discover some more powerful lever than that which then moved the world, and it is maintained that the Reformation must not be referred to Luther alone, but that the age in which he lived must necessarily have produced it.

Induced at once by the obedience which he owed to the truth of God, and by charity towards men, Luther went up into the pulpit, forewarning his hearers, as he himself says.¹ His prince had received from the pope private indulgences for the church of Wittenberg castle, so that some of the blows aimed at those of the inquisitor, could hardly avoid falling on these of the elector. He cared not! and was content to risk disgrace. Had he sought to please men, he never could have been the servant of Christ.

"No man can prove by Scripture that God's justice requires any penalty or any satisfaction from the sinner," said the faithful minister of the Word to the people of Wittenberg. "The only duty it lays upon him is true repentance, sincere conversion, resolution to bear the cross of Jesus Christ, and to apply himself to good works. It is a great error for him to pretend himself to render satisfaction for his sins to the justice of God, for God forgives these always gratuitously, by an inestimable grace.

"The Christian church, it is true, requires something from the sinner, and this of course she may remit. But that is all. . . And farther, these indulgences of the Church are

¹ Sauberlich.

tolerated only for the sake of indolent and imperfect Christians, who have no desire to exercise themselves zealously in good works; for they excite no one to sanctification, but leave every man in imperfection."¹

Next, addressing himself to the pretext under which the indulgences were published: "It were far better," he continued, "to contribute from love to God to the building of St. Peter's church, than to purchase indulgences with that view. . . . But, say you, shall we not buy them then? I have told you already, and I now repeat, my advice is that nobody should buy them. Leave them to Christians who are asleep: but you, do you advance apart and for yourselves! We must divert the faithful from indulgences, and urge them to the good works which they now neglect."

At last, darting a look upon his opponents, Luther wound up by saying: "And should any one exclaim that I am a heretic (for the truth I preach is very hurtful to the strong-box) I trouble myself very little about their croaking. Such are men of gloomy and sickly brains, who have never been impressed by the Bible, never have read Christian doctrine, never have understood their own doctors, and who lie rotting among the tattered rags of their vain opinions!² . . . May God grant both to them and us a sound judgment! Amen." With these words the doctor came down from the pulpit, leaving his hearers greatly excited by the boldness of his language.

This sermon was printed and made a profound impression on all who read it. Tetzel answered it and Luther rejoined; that discussion took place, however, somewhat later, in 1518.

The feast of All Saints was now approaching, and here it is

¹ Thus do men wrest or misapprehend the doctrine of Luther and the Reformers when they charge it with maintaining good works to be unnecessary, and with being an obstacle to their performance. Such, indeed, was the case with the doctrine of indulgences purchasable with money, as is felt by all virtuously disposed men. It was one of the reasons that made Luther not less indignant at the indulgences than because of their subverting the doctrine of justification by grace. This, on a careful comparison, will be seen from the import of his propositions against the indulgences which appear a little farther on. Although, therefore, he seems to express himself occasionally in rather severe terms against good works, he was no enemy to really good works, or inconsistent with himself. He had in his eye the useless works of individual caprice or human institution, or opposed the merit only of good works as what cannot, truly, go hand in hand with true Christian sanctification.—L. R.

² Sondern in ihren locherichen und zerrissenen Opinien, viel nahe verwesen. (L. Opp. (L.) vii. p. 119.

that the chronicles of that time relate a circumstance which, though of little importance as regards the history of that epoch, may serve nevertheless to mark its character. I refer to a dream of the Elector, which there can be no doubt was true in the main, although several circumstances may have been added by those who have related it. It is mentioned by Seckendorf, and according to the remark of that respectable writer, the dread of putting it into the power of adversaries to say that Luther's doctrines were founded on dreams, may possibly have deterred several historians from saying anything about it.¹

The Elector Frederick of Saxony was at his castle of Schweinitz, six leagues from Wittenberg, say the chronicles of that time. On the 21st of October towards morning, being with his brother, Duke John, who was then conjoined with him in the government and who reigned alone at his death, his chancellor also being present, the Elector said to the Duke:

"I must tell you, brother, a dream which I had last night, and of which I should like to know the meaning. It has fixed itself so deeply in my mind that were I to live a thousand years, I should never forget it; for I dreamed it thrice, and each time it recurred with new circumstances.

DUKE JOHN.—"Was it a good or a bad dream?"

THE ELECTOR.—"I know not: God knows."

DUKE JOHN.—"Don't you disquiet yourself; but be so good as tell it me."

THE ELECTOR.—"Having gone to bed yester-evening, fatigued and depressed, I fell asleep soon after my prayer, and slept soundly for two hours and a half. Having then awoke, I had all sorts of thoughts thronging in my head till midnight. I mused about how I should like to keep the festival of all the saints; I prayed for the poor souls in purgatory, and besought God to conduct me, myself, my counsels, and my people, according to the truth. I again fell asleep; and then I dreamed that Almighty God sent me a monk who was the real son of the apostle St. Paul. All the saints accompanied him, by an order

¹ It is to be found, also, in Löscher, i. 46. &c., Tenzel's Anf. und Fortg. der Ref.—Junker's Erenged, p. 148. Lehmann's Besch. d. Meissn. Erzgeb. &c. and in a manuscript of the Weimar Archives, written from the relation of the story by Spalatin. We relate this dream according to that manuscript, as published at the last jubilee of the Reformation, (1817.)

from God, for the purpose of testifying before me in his favour, and declaring that he did not come to plot any deception, but that all he did was according to the will of God. They begged of me that I would be so good as graciously permit him to write something on the door of Wittenberg castle church, which I granted through the chancellor. Thereupon the monk went to the church door and began to write; he did so in letters of such size, that I could read what he wrote all the way from Schweinitz. The pen he used was so large that the end of it reached to Rome; it tickled the ear of a lion that was lying there;¹ and shook the triple crown on the head of the pope. All the cardinals and the princes ran up in haste and tried to keep it steady. Even I, and you, too, brother, would have lent our aid; I stretched out my arm . . . but at that moment I awoke, with my arm held out, at once frightened and very angry with the monk for not being able to hold his pen better . . . I recovered myself a little . . . it was but a dream.

"I again shut my eyes and lay half asleep. The same dream returned. The lion, continuing to be annoyed by the pen, began to roar with all his might, so that all Rome, and all the states of the holy empire, ran to see what was the matter. The pope besought them to oppose the monk, and addressed himself chiefly to me, as he was in my territory. Again I awoke, repeated the Lord's prayer, besought God to preserve his holiness, and again fell asleep.

"I then dreamed that all the princes of the Empire, including ourselves, hastened to Rome, and one after another tried to break the pen; but the more we attempted this, the stiffer it became; it rattled as if made of iron; at last we grew tired. I then made the monk be asked (for I was sometimes at Rome; sometimes at Wittenberg), where he got that pen and how it was so strong. "The pen," he replied "belonged to an old Bohemian goose,² a hundred years old; I got it from one of my old school-masters. As for its strength, it is owing to this that no one can deprive it of its soul and marrow; I myself am

¹ Leo X.

² John Huss. This circumstance may have been added afterwards, that there might be an allusion to what John Huss said as quoted above in the first book.

astonished at it." . . All at once I heard a loud cry: from the monk's long pen a great many other pens had gone forth.

. . I awoke for the third time, and found it was day. . ."

DUKE JOHN.—"Mr. Chancellor, what think you of it? Have we not here a Joseph or a Daniel receiving light from God? . ."

THE CHANCELLOR.—"Your Highness knows the common proverb that the dreams of maidens, learned men, and great lords, have usually some hidden meaning. But what this dream may signify we shall only know when the times to which it relates, shall have arrived. Wherefore trust its fulfilment to God and commit all to his hands."

DUKE JOHN.—"I think with you, Mr. Chancellor; there is no need of boring into our heads to discover what this may betoken. God will know how to direct all things for his glory."

THE ELECTOR.—"May our faithful God do so! Yet never shall I forget that dream. I have thought, indeed, of an interpretation. . . But shall keep it to myself. Time perhaps will show whether I have guessed aright."

Thus passed, according to the Weimar manuscript, the morning of the 31st of October at Schweinitz: let us see what was doing that evening at Wittemberg. We now return to the proper sphere of history.

V. Luther's words produced little effect, and Tetzl, without giving himself any uneasiness, continued his impious traffic and discourses.¹ Can we suppose that Luther would resign himself to these crying abuses, and hold his peace with regard to them? As a pastor he had earnestly exhorted those who availed themselves of his ministry; as a preacher, he had sounded a note of warning from the pulpit; and now it remained for him to speak as a theologian; to address himself no longer to a few souls in a confession box, or to the congregation that met in the church at Wittemberg, but to all who, like him, were *doctors* of the Word of God. He took his resolution accordingly.

Not that he thought of attacking the Church; it was not the pope that he was to bring into court: far otherwise, it was his very respect for the pope that would not allow him to be silent any longer on the subject of the pretensions by which

¹ Cujus impiis et nefariis concionibus incitatus Lutherus, studio pietatis ardens, edidit propositiones de indulgentiis. (Melancht. Vit. Luth.)

offence was done to him. He thought himself bound to take part with the pope against audacious men, who were bold enough to mix up his venerable name with their shameful traffic. Far from contemplating a revolution which was to subvert the supremacy of Rome, Luther counted on having the pope and catholicity as his allies against these impudent monks.¹

The feast of all saints was a most important day for Wittenberg, and still more so for the church which the Elector had built there and stored with relics. On that occasion these relics were taken out, ornamented with silver, gold, and precious stones; and in that state were displayed to the people, whom they astonished and dazzled by their magnificence.² Whoever on that day visited the church and confessed there, obtained a rich indulgence; and accordingly, it was a time when crowds of pilgrims flocked to Wittenberg.

Luther, fully resolved what to do, boldly walked forth on the evening of the 31st October, 1517, towards the church whither the superstitious pilgrims were advancing in crowds; and to the church door he attached ninety-five theses, or propositions, against the doctrine of the indulgences. Neither the elector, nor Staupitz, nor Spalatin, nor any one even of his most intimate friends, had been informed of this procedure.³

In a kind of preamble Luther first declared, that he had written these theses in a spirit of true charity, and from the express desire of exhibiting the truth to the light of day. He farther announced his being ready to defend them on the day following, at the university itself before and against all impugn-ers. They excited general attention: people read them and repeated them, and forthwith the pilgrims, the university, and the whole city, were in a stir.

The following are some of these propositions as written out by the monk's pen and attached to the church-door at Wittenberg.

1. "When our master and Lord, Jesus Christ, says: Repent, he desires that the entire life of believers on this earth should be one constant and continual repentance.

¹ Et in iis certus mihi videbar, me habiturum patronum papam, cujus fiducia tunc fortiter nitebar. (L. Opp. lat. in præf.)

² Quas magnifico apparatu publicè populis ostendi curavit. (Cochleus, 4.)

³ Cum hujus disputationis nullus etiam intimorum amicorum fuerit conscius (L. Epp. i. p. 186.)

2. "That saying cannot be understood as applying to the sacrament of penance, (that is to say, to confession and satisfaction), as administered by the priest.

3. "Nevertheless, the Lord means not here to speak of inward repentance only: inward repentance is nought, if it be not followed outwardly by all sorts of mortifications of the flesh.

4. "Repentance and sorrow, that is to say, true repentance, last as long as a man is displeased with himself, that is, until he passes out of this life into life everlasting.

5. "The pope neither can remit, nor does he wish to remit, any penalty but what he has imposed of his good pleasure, or in conformity with the canons, that is to say, with the papal ordinances.

6. "The pope cannot remit any condemnation, but can only declare and confirm the remission of it made by God himself; unless it be in cases appertaining to him. Should he do otherwise, the condemnation remains entirely the same.

8. "The laws of ecclesiastical penance ought to be imposed on the living only, and do not at all affect the dead.

21. "The commissioners of indulgences are mistaken when they say, that by the pope's indulgence, man is delivered from all punishment and saved.

25. "Each bishop in his own diocese, and each priest in his own parish, have the same power over purgatory that the pope has over it in the church at large.

27. "Those men preach human follies, who pretend that the moment that money chinks in the strong box the soul soars out of purgatory.

28. "This is certain, that as soon as the money chinks, avarice and covetousness arrive, increase, and multiply. But the succours and the prayers of the Church depend solely on the will and good pleasure of God.

32. "Those who imagine themselves secure of their salvation by indulgences, will go to the devil with those who teach them.

35. "Those men teach anti-christian doctrines, who pretend that in order to deliver a soul from purgatory, or to purchase an indulgence, there is no need for either grief or repentance.

36. "Every Christian who feels true repentance for his sins,

has complete remission of penalty and fault, without requiring any indulgence to that effect.

37. "Every true Christian, dead or living, participates in the benefits of Christ or of the Church, by the bestowment of God and without a letter of indulgence.

38. "Nevertheless, we must not despise the distribution and the pardon of the pope; for his pardon is a declaration of the pardon of God.

40. "True repentance and sorrow seek and love punishment; but the gentleness of the indulgence looses from punishment and causes people to conceive hatred against it.

42. "Christians must be taught, that the pope has neither thought nor wish for comparisons being anywise instituted between the action of purchasing indulgences and any work of mercy.

43. "Christians must be taught that he who gives to the poor, and lends to the necessitous, does better than he who purchases an indulgence.

44. "For the work of charity makes charity increase and makes man more pious; whereas the indulgence makes him no better, but only more self-confident, and more secure from dread of punishment.

45. "Christians must be taught that he who sees his neighbour in want, and notwithstanding his doing so, buys an indulgence, does not purchase an indulgence from the pope but brings on himself the anger of God.

46. "Christians must be taught that if they have no superfluities, they are bound to keep for their own families whatever is required for necessities, and ought not to lavish it on indulgences.

47. "Christians must be taught that to buy an indulgence is what they are free to do or not, and is not a commanded duty.

48. "Christians must be taught that the pope being more in want of the prayer of faith than of money, desires to have the prayer more than the money, however he may distribute indulgences.

49. "Christians must be taught that the pope's indulgence is good, if people do not trust to it, but that nothing is more hurtful, if it cause the loss of piety.

50. "Christians must be taught that were the pope aware of the exactions of the preachers of indulgences, he would rather have the metropolitan church of St. Peter burnt to ashes than see it built with the fleece, flesh, and bones of his sheep.

51. "Christians should be taught that the pope, as in duty bound, would give away his own money to the poor folks who are now despoiled of their last mite by the preachers of indulgences, were he even to sell the metropolitan Church of St. Peter for that purpose.

52. "To hope to be saved by indulgences is a lying and empty hope, even though the commissioner of indulgences—nay, more, were the pope himself willing to pledge his own soul to make it good.

53. "Those are enemies of the pope and of Jesus Christ, who for the sake of the preaching of indulgences, forbid the preaching of the word of God.

55. "The pope can have no other idea but this: If the indulgence, which is the less affair, be celebrated with a bell, procession, and ceremony, much more ought the gospel, which is the greater, be honoured and celebrated with a hundred bells, a hundred processions, and a hundred ceremonies.

62. The true and precious treasure of the Church is the holy gospel of the glory and the grace of God.

65. "The treasures of the gospel are the nets in which the rich, who are now living at their ease, used in former times to be caught.

66. "But the treasures of the indulgence are the nets with which, at this day, the riches of the people are fished out of them.

67. "Bishops and pastors are in duty bound to receive the commissioners of indulgences with all respect.

68. "But much more is it their duty to assure themselves, with their eyes and ears, that the said commissioners do not preach the reveries of their own imaginations instead of the orders of the pope.

71. "Cursed be he that speaks against the pope's indulgence.

72. "But blessed be he that speaks against the foolish and imprudent words of the preachers of indulgences.

76. "The pope's indulgence cannot take away the smallest daily sin, in so far as regards the guilt incurred and the offence done.

79. "To say that a cross ornamented with the pope's arms is more effectual than the cross of Christ, is blasphemy.

80. "Bishops, pastors, and teachers who permit such things to be said to the people, ought to be called to account for doing so.

81. "Such shameless preaching, such impudent praise of indulgences, make it difficult for the learned to defend the dignity and the honour of the pope against the calumnies of preachers, and the subtle and artful questions of the common people.

86. "Why, say they, does not the pope build the metropolitan church of St. Peter with his own money rather than with that of poor Christians; he whose fortune exceeds that of the richest Cræsus?

92. "May we, therefore, be disembarassed of all preachers that say to the Church of Christ: Peace! peace! when there is no peace.

94. "Christians should be exhorted sedulously to follow Christ as their chief, through crosses, death, and hell.

95. "For much better that they should through many tribulations enter the kingdom of heaven, than obtain a carnal security from the consolations of a false peace."

Such was the commencement of the work, for in these theses of Luther we behold the germs of the Reformation. Here the abuses of the indulgences were attacked, and it was this that struck people most; but under these attacks, moreover, there lay a principle which, although it far less caught the attention of the multitude, was yet to overturn the entire fabric of the popedom. Here the gospel doctrine of a free and gratuitous remission of sins was for the first time publicly professed. Meanwhile the work could not fail to advance. In fact it was evident that whoever should have this faith in the remission of sins announced by the Wittenberg doctor, whoever should have that conversion and that sanctification of which he inculcated the necessity, would care no more about human ordinances, would escape from the swaddling bands and shackles of Rome, and would acquire the liberty of the sons of God. All errors

must inevitably give away to this truth. It was through it that light first began to dawn on Luther's soul ; it was through it also, that light was to diffuse itself in the Church. A clear knowledge of this truth was what was wanting in the reformers that preceded him ; hence their efforts were followed with little fruit. Luther himself owns, at a later date, that in proclaiming justification by faith, he had laid the axe to the root of the tree. "What we attack," says he, "in the adherents of the popedom, is doctrine. Huss and Wickliff attacked their way of living only ; but in assailing their doctrine, the goose is seized by the neck. All hangs on the Word which the pope has taken from us and has falsified. I have overcome the pope, because my doctrine is according to God, and his according to the devil."¹

In our own day, likewise, we have forgotten this capital doctrine of justification, although in an opposite sense from our fathers. "In the times of Luther," says one of our cotemporaries,² "the remission of sins at least cost money ; but in our days, every man administers it gratis to himself." These two deviations from the truth are much alike, and perhaps there is even more forgetfulness of God in ours than in that of the sixteenth century. The principle of justification by the grace of God, which drew the Church forth from so much darkness at the time of the Reformation, is the only one that can renew this generation also, put an end to its doubts and its oscillations, destroy the selfishness which corrodes it, establish morality and justice among the nations ; in a word, re-attach to God the world which has gone away from him.

But if the theses of Luther were strong in the force of the truth which they proclaim, they were no less so in the faith of the man who stood forth ready to defend them. He had now courageously unsheathed the sword of the Word, and this he did fully believing in the might of the truth. He felt that when a man casts himself on the promises of God, he may, in the language of the world, hazard something. "Let him who would commence any good undertaking," says he, in speaking of this bold enterprise, "do so, confiding in the goodness of the task he

¹ Wenn man die Lehre angreift, so wird die Gans am Krage gegriffen. (L. Opp. (W.) xxii., p. 1369.)

² Harms de Kiel.

attempts, but let him beware of counting on assistance or consolation from men. For that word will not lie; *It is good to trust in the Lord. And verily, none that trust in thee shall be confounded.* But let him who neither will, nor can hazard anything while trusting in God, be well on his guard against undertaking anything.”¹ After attaching those theses to the door of All Saints Church, Luther, no doubt, went back to his quiet cell, filled with that peace and joy which flow from having done an action in the Lord’s name, and in the interest of everlasting truth.

Great as is the hardihood that pervades these theses, they still exhibit the monk who refused to admit a single doubt as to the authority of the Roman see. But while attacking the doctrine of indulgences, Luther, without being aware of it, had fallen foul of many errors, the discovery of which could not be agreeable to the pope, in as much as it must have led, sooner or later, to his supremacy being brought into question. Luther did not as yet see so far; still he felt the boldness of the step he had taken, and consequently thought it was his duty to temper its audacity as far as the respect he owed to truth would permit. Accordingly, he set forth these theses only as doubtful propositions, on which he craved to be enlightened by the learned; and following the then established practice, he added to them a solemn protestation, in which he declared that he desired to say or affirm nothing that was not founded on holy Scripture, the fathers of the Church, and the rights and decretals of the see of Rome.

On beholding the measureless and unlooked-for consequences of this courageous attack, Luther, in the issue, was often astonished at himself, and could not understand how he had dared to do such a thing. An unseen, and a mightier hand than his, held the guiding threads, and urged the herald of the truth into a path which it concealed from him as yet, and the difficulties presented by which would have deterred him perhaps from entering it, had he foreseen them, and had he advanced alone and of himself. “I entered into that dispute,” said he, “with-

¹ L. Opp. Leip. vi. p. 518.

out any settled purpose, and without either knowing it or wishing it; God is my witness.”^{1 2}

Luther had been able to trace these abuses to their source. A small book had been brought to him ornamented with the arms of the archbishop of Maintz and of Magdeburg, and containing the rules to be observed in the sale of the indulgences; so that it was that young prelate, that elegant prince, who had enjoined, or at least sanctioned, all this knavery. Luther saw in him only a superior whom he was bound to regard with awe and veneration;³ but not wishing to beat the air at a venture, and thinking he ought to address himself to those who were charged with the government of the Church, he sent him a letter replete at once with frankness and humility. It was on the very day that he attached the theses to the church-doors that Luther wrote to Albert.

“Pardon me, most reverend Father in Christ, and most illustrious Prince,” he says to him, “if I, who am but the dregs of men,⁴ have the rashness to write to your sublime grandeur. The Lord Jesus is my witness, that feeling how small and despicable I am, I have long delayed doing so. . . . May your Highness, meanwhile, allow a look to fall on a grain of dust, and in the spirit of episcopal gentleness, graciously receive my request.

“The papal indulgence is carried hither and thither through the country in your Grace’s name. I wish not to accuse the vociferations of the preachers, not having heard them, so much as the false ideas of simple and gross-minded persons among the people, who, in purchasing indulgences, think themselves sure of their salvation. . . .

¹ Casu enim, non voluntate nec studio, in has turbas incidi; Deum ipsum testor. (Luth. Opp. lat. in præf.)

² These words, flowing spontaneously from the heart, are of themselves sufficient to do away with the slanderous imputation that Luther had other objects in view besides those he professed, and was influenced by dishonourable motives. And truly, the whole history of his life and labours demonstrates that, before all things else, he had been impelled by his own conscience to begin the work, without having reckoned beforehand upon all its results; that he was often urged to proceed with it against his own inclination; was prepared, and more and more adapted to it, by God himself; and was purified from the misconceptions that at first adhered to him partly by means of the very perverse proceedings of his opponents.—L. R.

³ Domino suo et pastori in Christo venerabiliter metuendo. Address on the Letter. (Epp. i. p. 68.)

⁴ Fex hominum. (Epp. i. p. 68.)

“Great God! the souls entrusted to you, are prepared by their instructions, not for life but for death. The just account that will one day be demanded from you, becomes larger and larger from day to day. . . . I can no longer hold my peace. No! man is not saved by the work or by the office of his bishop. . . . Even the righteous is hardly saved, and the way that leads to life is a narrow one. Why, then, do the preachers of indulgences, with their idle fables, fill the people with carnal security?

“The indulgence alone, if we are to believe them, ought to be proclaimed and exalted. . . . What now! . . . is it not the chief, and the sole duty of bishops, to teach the people the Gospel and the love of Jesus Christ?¹ Jesus Christ himself has nowhere ordained the preaching of the indulgence, but he has vehemently enjoined the preaching of the Gospel.² How horrible, then, and how dangerous for a bishop, should he permit silence to be maintained as to the Gospel, and the noise of the indulgences to be sounded alone and unceasingly in the ears of the people! . . .

“Most worthy Father in God, in the instruction of the commissioners, which has been published in your Grace’s name (doubtless without your knowledge), it is said that the indulgence is the most precious of treasures, that by it man is reconciled with God, and that repentance is not requisite in those who purchase it.

“What can I, and what ought I, then, to do, most worthy Bishop,—most serene Prince? Ah, I supplicate your Highness, by the Lord Jesus Christ, to bestow a look of fatherly watchfulness on this affair, to suppress this book entirely, and to enjoin the preachers to hold a different language to the people. If you do not this, beware lest a voice be some day raised in refutation of those preachers, to the great disgrace of your most serene Highness.”

Luther at the same time sent his theses to the archbishop, and, in a postscript, invited him to peruse them, that he might be convinced of the small degree of certainty to be found in the doctrine of indulgences.

¹ Ut populus Evangelium discat atque charitatem Christi (Ibid.)

² Vehementer præcipit. (Ibid.)

Thus, all that Luther desired was that the sentinels of the Church should awake, and bethink themselves at last of putting an end to the evils which were desolating it; nor could any thing be more noble, or respectful, than this letter, addressed by a monk to one of the greatest princes both of the Church and the empire. Never did man act more in the spirit of Jesus Christ's injunction: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This is not the procedure of fierce revolutionists, who despise dominions and speak evil of dignities; it is the cry of a Christian's and of a priest's conscience, honouring all men, but mainly marked by the fear of God. All prayers and entreaties, however, were vain. The youthful Albert, engrossed with his pleasures and with the projects of his ambition, made no reply to so solemn an appeal. The bishop of Brandenburg, also, Luther's ordinary, and a learned and pious man, received from him a copy of his theses, and replied that he was attacking the power of the Church; that he would bring upon himself much annoyance and disappointment; that it was a matter above his powers, and that he would strongly advise him to remain quiet.¹ The princes of the Church closed their ears to the voice of God, while it spoke to them in so energetic and so affecting a tone in the person of Luther. They would not understand the signs of the times; they were stricken with that blindness which already had brought ruin on so many powers and dignities. "Both then thought," said Luther subsequently, "that the pope would be found too strong for a wretched mendicant like me."

But Luther could judge better than these bishops could do, of the disastrous effects of the indulgences on the morals and lives of the people; for with that part of society he lived in direct intercourse. He saw constantly, and before his eyes, what the bishops knew only from faithless reports. But if the bishops failed him, God did not fail him. The Head of the Church, who has gone into the heavens, and to whom alone all power has been given upon earth, had himself prepared the soil and placed the seed in his servant's hand; he had given wings to the seed of truth, and forthwith he scattered it abroad over the whole extent of the Church.

¹ Er sollte still halten, es ware eine grosse Sache. (Matth. 13.)

No one presented himself on the day following at the university to attack Luther's propositions; and, indeed, Tetzels traffic was too much cried down, and too shameless, for any one but himself or one of his people, to dare to take up the gauntlet. But these theses were destined to make an impression elsewhere besides the vaulted roofs of an academy. Hardly had they been nailed to the church-door at Wittemberg castle than the feeble strokes of the hammer were succeeded, throughout all Germany, by a stroke that vibrated to the very foundations of Rome in her pride, threatening with sudden downfall the walls, and gates, and main beams of the popedom, stunning and frightening its men of might, and awakening at the same time many thousands of human beings from the sleep of error in which they long had lain.¹

The theses spread with the fleetness of lightning, and in less than a month they appeared in Rome. "In the course of a fortnight," says a contemporary historian, "they were found throughout all Germany, and in twice that time, had traversed nearly the whole of Christendom, as if the very angels had been employed as messengers, and had carried them before all men's eyes. No one could believe what a noise they made." They were subsequently translated into Dutch and Spanish, and a traveller sold them at Jerusalem. "Every body," said Luther, "was complaining of the indulgences, and as the bishops and doctors had all held their peace, and nobody had liked to bell the cat,² poor Luther became a famous doctor, because at last, as they said, one of them had been found bold enough to do the deed. But I liked not this glory, and to me the song seemed too high for my voice."³

Part of the pilgrims who flocked from all countries to Wittemberg, to attend the feast of All Saints, instead of indulgences, took the famous theses of the Augustine monk home with them, and thus helped towards their being disseminated. Every body read, pondered, and commented upon them. They engrossed

¹ Walther, Nachr. v. Luther, p. 45.

² Myconius, hist. ref. . . . p. 23. à *attacher le grelot (au chat)*. This old expression, meaning to undertake some hazardous responsibility, gave the nickname of "Bell the cat" to one of the ancient Douglasses in Scotland.—Tr.

³ Das lied wollte meiner Stimme zu hoch werden. (L. Opp.)

attention in all the monasteries and universities.¹ All pious monks who had gone into monasteries for the purpose of saving their souls, all right-hearted and honest men, were delighted with such a simple and striking confession of the truth, and heartily wished that Luther would go on with the work which he had begun. "I have observed," says a most trust-worthy witness and one of the reformer's great rivals, Erasmus, writing to a cardinal, "that the purer a man's morals are, and the more evangelical his piety, the less is he opposed to Luther. His life is lauded even by those who cannot endure his creed. The world was growing tired of a doctrine replete with so many childish fables and human ordinances, and thirsted for that living water, pure and hidden, which streams from the veins of the evangelists and the apostles. Luther's genius seemed to me to fit him, and his zeal must have inflamed him, for so glorious an enterprise."²

VI. If we would form any just idea of the various, yet prodigious, effects resulting from these propositions in Germany, we must follow them wherever they penetrated, into the closets of the learned, the cells of monks, and the palaces of princes.

Reuchlin received them when wearied with the rude combat which he had to maintain with the monks, and the vigour which this new wrestler displayed in them, revived the depressed spirits of the old champion of literature, and restored joy to his afflicted heart. "Thanks be to God," he exclaimed after reading them, "they have found a man now, who will give them so much to do as to compel them to allow my old age to wear itself out in peace."

The prudent Erasmus was in the Netherlands when these theses reached him. He felt an inward joy at seeing his secret wishes for the redress of abuses so courageously expressed; and he gave the author his approbation, only exhorting him to more moderation and prudence. Notwithstanding, on the occasion of some persons violently reproaching Luther in his presence, "God," he said, "has given men a physician who cuts deep into the flesh, because without such an one, the disease would have proved past cure." And when the elector of Saxony, some time

¹ In alle hohe Schulen und Klöster. (Matth. 13.)

² Ad hoc præstandum mihi videbatur ille, et natura compositus et accensus studio. (Erasm. Epp. Campegio Cardinali. i. p. 650.)

afterwards, sought his advice in regard to Luther's affair; "I am not at all surprised," he replied with a smile, "that he has occasioned so much noise, for he has committed two unpardonable faults—he has attacked the tiara of the pope and the belly of the monks."¹

Doctor Fleck, prior of the monastery of Steinlausitz, had for a long while ceased reading the mass, but had told no one the true cause. He one day found the theses of Luther stuck up in the refectory of his monastery, went up to them, began to read them, and after reading only a few, unable to contain himself any longer for joy, he exclaimed: "Ho! Ho! the man is come at last whom we have so long expected, and who will make you see it, you monks! . . ." Then reading into the future, says Mathesius, and playing on the meaning of the word Wittenberg: "The whole world," said he, "will go to look for wisdom at that mountain and will find it there."² He wrote to the doctor, urging him boldly to persevere in this glorious struggle. Luther calls him a man full of joy and consolation.

The ancient and celebrated episcopal see of Wurzburg was then occupied by one who, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, was remarkable for his piety, integrity, and wisdom. This was Laurence of Bibra, whom we have already mentioned. When a gentleman came to inform him that he intended to send his daughter to a nunnery: "Rather give her a husband," said he, and then added; "Do you require money for that purpose? I will lend it to you." He was held in the highest esteem by the emperor and all the princes. He mourned over the abuses that prevailed in the church, and especially those of the monasteries. The theses reached his palace; he read them with great satisfaction, and publicly expressed his approbation of Luther. He afterwards wrote to the elector Frederick: "Do not allow godly doctor Luther to go away, for he is ill-used." Delighted with this testimony, the elector wrote with his own hand to the Reformer, to let him know of it.

Even the emperor Maximilian, the predecessor of Charles V., read the monk of Wittenberg's theses with admiration; he discovered the author's importance, and foresaw that that obscure

¹ Müller's Denkw. iv. 256.

² Alle Welt von diesem Weissenberg, Weissheit holen und bekommen, (p. 13.)

Augustinian might become a powerful ally on the side of Germany in its struggle with Rome. He likewise instructed an envoy to say to the elector of Saxony: "Carefully see to the safety of the monk Luther, for the time may come when we may have need of him."¹ And shortly afterwards, being at the diet with the Elector's intimate councillor, Pfeffinger; "Well now," says he to him, "what is our Augustinian about? Truly his propositions are not to be despised! He will make a fine exposure of the monks!"²

At Rome itself, and in the Vatican, the theses were not so ill received as one might suppose. Leo X. judged them rather in the spirit of a friend to literature than in that of a pope. The diversion they afforded him made him forget the severe truths they contained; and when the master of the sacred palace, Sylvester Prierias, who was charged with the examination of books, proposed that Luther should be treated as a heretic: "This friar Martin Luther," he replied, "is a very fine genius, and all that is said against him is mere monkish jealousy?"³

There were few on whom the theses of Luther had more influence than upon the Annaberg scholar who had been pitilessly repulsed by Tetzel. Myconius had gone into a monastery. The very night of his arrival, he thought he saw in a dream an immense field covered all over with ripe grain. "Reap," said the voice of the person that conducted him; and while he excused himself on the ground of his want of skill, his guide showed him a reaper who toiled with inconceivable activity. "Follow him and do as he does,"⁴ said the guide. With all Luther's avidity for holiness, Myconius devoted himself while in the monastery to watching, to fasting, to bodily macerations, and to all the works, in short, of man's invention. But he despaired at length of ever reaching the object of his efforts. Relinquishing his studies, he devoted himself entirely to manual labour; employing himself by turns in binding books, at the turning-lathe, or at some other handicraft. Yet this outward activity failed to appease his troubled

¹ Dass er uns den Munch Luther fleissig beware. (Matth. 15.)

² Schmidt, Brand. Reformationsgesch. p. 124.

³ Che fratre Martino Luthero haveva un bellissimo ingegno, e che coteste erano invidie fratesche. (Brandelli, a contemporary of Leo and Dominicano, *Ilist. trag.* pars. 3.)

⁴ Melch. Adami Vita Myconii.

conscience. God had spoken to him; he could never more relapse into his former sleep, and this state of anguish lasted for some years. People sometimes imagine that the paths trodden by the Reformers were all very smooth, and that in rejecting the practices of the Church, there remained nothing for them but what was pleasant and agreeable; but people are not aware that they reached the truth only through the endurance of inward struggles, a thousand times more painful than the observances to which slavish minds can easily reconcile themselves.¹

At length arrived the year 1517; the theses of Luther were published; they were circulated throughout all Christendom, and at last reached the monastery of which the poor Annaberg scholar was then an inmate. He hid himself in a corner of the house with John Voit, another monk, that they might peruse them undisturbed.² There, to be sure, he found the very truth which he had learned from his father; his eyes were opened; he felt a voice within him responding to that which was now resounding through all Germany, and great was the comfort that filled his heart. "I see well, said he, that Martin Luther was the reaper whom I beheld in my dream, and who taught me to gather up the sheaves." Forthwith he set himself to profess the doctrine proclaimed by Luther. The monks heard him with alarm; they contested his views, and loudly opposed Luther and his monastery. "That monastery," said Myconius, "is like our Lord's sepulchre. Men would prevent Christ from rising again from it, but they will not succeed." At length, seeing that they could not convince him, his superiors inter-

¹ This is an original and just remark of the author, placing the matter in its true light. It is possible that, even now, the defenders of the Romish church may appeal to manifold mortifications of the flesh, and acts of self-denial, as something very excellent, and proofs of the piety of their people, particularly their monks. But be it well remarked that these thereby seek to obtain for themselves carnal rest, and thus, at bottom, seek themselves; while those who are not less in earnest among us, (for no regard is to be paid to the thoughtless multitude on either side), do not so readily suppose that peace is to be found in any performance, however difficult and painful, but experience much inward struggling and vexation while they endeavour, although it be only in the common business of their lives, to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and, above all, they anxiously search out the path of truth and righteousness, according to the will and counsel, not of themselves, or of men, but of God, and steadfastly seek to walk therein, without turning either to the right hand or to the left.—L. R.

² Legit tunc cum Joanne Voito, in angulum abditus, libellos Lutheri. (Melch. Adam.)

dicted him for a year and a half from all communication beyond the monastery; allowing him neither to write nor to receive letters, and threatening him with perpetual imprisonment. Nevertheless, his hour of deliverance also arrived. Being subsequently appointed pastor of Zwickau, he was the first that openly expressed himself against the popedom in Thuringia. "Then," said he, "I could labour with my venerable father Luther, in the gospel harvest." Jonas has called him a man who could do what he would.¹

No doubt there were other souls, besides, for whom the theses of Luther were the signal of life. They kindled a new light in many cells, cabins, and palaces; and while those, says Mathesius, who came to monasteries looking for a good table, a life of nothingness, or of consideration and honours, loaded the name of Luther with insults, the religious who lived in prayer, fasting, and macerations, gave thanks to God for their having heard the cry of that eagle which John Huss had announced a century before.² Even the common people, although they did not very well understand the theological part of the question, and knew only that this person rose against the empire of useless alms-beggars and monks, greeted him with bursts of joy. The sensation produced by these bold propositions was immense. Some few of the Reformer's cotemporaries nevertheless, foresaw to what serious results they might lead, and what numerous obstacles they were sure to encounter. These made no secret of their fears, and rejoiced with trembling.

"I am much afraid," wrote the excellent canon of Augsburg, Bernard Adelman, to his friend Pirkheimer, "that this worthy man may yet be compelled to yield to the avarice and the power of the partizans of the indulgences. His representations have had so little effect, that the bishop of Augsburg, our primate and metropolitan,³ has just given orders, in the pope's name, for new indulgences for behoof of St. Peter's church at Rome. Let him lose no time in procuring the aid of the princes; let him beware of tempting God; for a man must be wanting in common sense, not to perceive the imminent danger in which he

¹ Qui potuit quod voluit.

² Davon Magister Johann Huss geweissaget. (Math. 13.)

³ Totque uxorum vir, he adds. (Heumani Documenta litt. p. 167.)

is placed." Adelman was delighted when the report went abroad, that Henry VIII. had sent for Luther to come to England. "There," thought he, "he might teach the truth in peace." Many thus imagined that the doctrine of the gospel was about to be aided by the powers of the civil governments. They knew not that it advances independently of that power, and that when it is on its side, it often obstructs and enfeebles it.

The famous historian, Albert Kranz, happened to be at Hamburg on his death-bed, when Luther's theses were brought to him. "You are in the right, brother Martin!" cried the dying man, "but you won't attain your object. . . . Poor monk! go to your cell and cry: Have mercy upon me, O God!"¹

An old priest at Hexter in Westphalia, having received and read the theses in his parsonage, shaking his head, said in low Dutch, "Dear brother Martin, should you succeed in subverting that purgatory and all these paper-mongers, truly you are a great gentleman;" under which words, Erbenius, who lived a century later, wrote this rhyme:

Quid vero nunc si viveret
Bonus iste clericus diceret? 2

Not only did many of Luther's friends entertain great apprehensions as to the course he was taking, but moreover, several signified to him their disapprobation.

Grieved at the thought of a quarrel of such consequence commencing in his diocese, the bishop of Brandenburg wished to smother it; and resolved to attempt this by gentle methods. He sent word to Luther by the Abbot of Lenin, saying: "In these theses upon the indulgences, I find nothing that is contrary to the catholic verity; I myself condemn these indiscreet proclamations; but for the love of peace, and out of regard for your bishop, write no more on the subject." Luther was confounded at finding so great an abbot, and so great a bishop, addressing him with so much humility, and so deeply was he affected by it, and so hurried away by his first emotions, as to reply.

¹ Frater, abi in cellam et dic: Miserere mei. (Lindher in Luther's Leben, p. 93.)

² What, were he living at this day,
Would the good German parson say?

"I consent to this: I would choose rather to obey than to work miracles, even were it in my power to work them."¹

The elector beheld with pain the commencement of a struggle, legitimate no doubt, but of which it was impossible to foresee the end. No prince more than Frederick desired the maintenance of the public peace. Now, how immense the conflagration that this small fire might kindle? What disorders, what national convulsions, might not this quarrel among monks produce? The elector, accordingly, again and again sent word to Luther of the vexation it was costing him.²

Even in his own order, and in the very monastery at Wittenberg, Luther found persons who disapproved. The prior and subprior were intimidated by the loud tone in which Tetzels and his companions gave utterance to their wrath. Panic-struck and trembling, they repaired to friar Martin's little cell: "Mercy on us," said they, "do not bring disgrace upon our order! Already are the other orders, and especially the Dominicans, in a transport of joy, on finding that they no longer stand alone in bearing reproach." Luther was at first affected by this appeal, but soon recovering himself, he replied: "Dear Fathers, if the thing be not done in the name of God, it will come to nought; if otherwise, let it go on." The prior and subprior were silent. "It continues to advance," continued Luther, after relating this, "and if it please God, it will go on better and better to the end. Amen."³

This, however, was far from being the only attack that Luther had to sustain. He was accused at Erfurt of pride and violence in his manner of condemning the opinions of others; the common reproach brought against men who have the strong convictions inspired by the Word of God. He was charged, also, with being hasty and inconsiderate.

"They require me to show modesty," replied Luther, "and they themselves trample modesty under foot in the judgment they pass upon me! . . . We are ever beholding the mote that is in another's eye, and consider not the beam that is in

¹ Bene sum contentus: malo obedire quam miracula facere, etiam si possem. (Epp. i. 71.)

² Suumque dolorem sæpe significavit, metuens discordias majores. (Melanct. Vita. Luth.)

³ L. Opp. (L.) vi. p. 518.

our own. . . . The truth will not gain more by my modesty than it will lose by my rashness." "I should like to know," he continues, addressing himself to Lange, "what errors you and your theologians have discovered in my theses? Who knows not that a man can seldom put forth a new idea, without appearing proud and being accused of seeking a quarrel? Were humility itself to undertake something new, she would instantly be subjected to the charge of pride by men thinking differently!¹ Why was it that Christ, and all the martyrs, were put to death? Because they seemed to be proud despisers of the wisdom of their day, and put forth novelties, without first humbly taking counsel from the organs of old opinions.

"Let not, then, the sages of the present day look for so much humility from me, or rather for so much hypocrisy, as to ask their advice before publishing what duty requires me to say. What I do, is not to be done by the prudence of men but by the counsel of God. If the work be from God, who shall hinder it? if it be not from God, who can make it go on? . . . Neither my will, nor theirs; not ours, but thy will, O holy Father, who art in heaven!" What courage, what a noble enthusiasm, what confidence in God, and, above all, what truth in these words, and what truth for all times!²

Nevertheless, the reproaches and accusations now showered upon Luther from all quarters, failed not so far to affect his mind. He was baulked in his expectations. He had hoped for the public adhesion of the heads of the Church, and of the most distinguished men of learning in the nation; but it turned out otherwise. A single word of approval which escaped their lips at the first moment of excitement, was all that he received from the best disposed; and many, on the contrary, of those

¹ Finge enim ipsam humilitatem nova conari, statim superbiæ subjicietur ab iis qui aliter sapiunt. (L. Epp. i. p. 73.)

² So it is! Yet nothing is more usual than to charge a man with pride when he refuses to submit to the common opinion. And no accusation is more likely to unnerve the courage of those whose only object it is to defend the truth and to place it in a clearer light, being worse even than the dread of persecution, were it unto death, in as much as in proportion as humility is felt to be the highest of the virtues, are men deterred from pursuing a particular course by the dread of being thought proud. Thank God, Luther saw through the cunning of this artifice, intended as it was to embarrass the resolute maintenance of the truth, and would not allow it by any means to deter him from doing his duty.—L. R.

whom he had previously venerated the most, now loudly blamed him. He felt that he stood absolutely alone in the Church; alone against Rome; alone at the base of that ancient and formidable edifice whose foundation went deep into the bowels of the earth, whose walls lifted themselves to the clouds, yet to which he had dealt so audacious a blow.¹ This at once perplexed and distressed him. Doubts which he thought he had overcome, returned upon him with augmented force. He trembled at the thought of being opposed by the authority of the whole Church: to withdraw from under that authority, to turn away from that voice which nations had for ages humbly obeyed, to place himself in opposition to that Church which he had been wont, from very infancy, to venerate as the mother of the faithful . . . he, a paltry monk . . . it was an effort beyond human power.² No step cost him more than this, and it was this, also, which decided the Reformation.

None could describe better than himself the struggle that now commenced in his soul: "I entered on this affair," he says, 'with great fear and great trembling. Who was I at that time—me, a poor, wretched, despicable friarling, liker to a dead body than a man,—who was I to oppose the majesty of the pope, in whose presence not only the kings of the earth and the entire world,—but farther, if I may so speak, heaven and earth trembled, and were constrained to obey his nod? . . . None can know what my heart suffered during those two first years, and in what depression, I might say, in what despair, I was often plunged. No idea can be formed of it by those haughty spirits who have attacked the pope with such hardihood since; although, with all their ability, they could not have done him the smallest harm, had not Jesus Christ already inflicted on him, through me, his weak unworthy instrument, a wound from which he will never recover. . . . But while they were content to look on, and left me to meet the danger singly, I was not so joyous, so much at my ease, and so confident of the affair succeeding; for I was not then aware of many things which, thanks be to God, I now know. There were, it is true, many pious Christians who were greatly

¹ Solus primo eram. (L. Opp. lat. in præf.)

² Concilium immanis audaciæ plenum. (Pallavicini, 1, 17.)

pleased with my propositions, and made much account of them; but I could not recognize or consider them as organs of the Holy Ghost; I looked only to the pope, to the cardinals, to the bishops, jurisconsults, monks, and priests. . . . It was from that quarter that I expected the breathings of the Spirit. However, the Scripture having made me come off victorious over all contrary arguments, at last, by the grace of Christ, with much anguish, toil, and difficulty, I got the better of the only argument that remained in my way, to wit, 'that we ought to hear the Church;'¹ for from the bottom of my heart I honoured the church of the pope as the true Church; and did so with very much more sincerity and veneration than those shameless and infamous corruptors who, merely to oppose me, are now crying it up so loudly. Had I despised the pope as they do in their heart who praise him so much with their lips, I should have trembled lest the earth should instantly open and swallow me up alive, as it did Korah and all who were with him."

How much honour do these struggles reflect upon Luther. how much sincerity and integrity do they open up to our view in his soul! and how much more worthy of our respect does he become in consequence of these painful assaults which he had to sustain both from without and from within, than an intrepidity unaccompanied with any such struggles could have made him. This travail of his soul clearly shows us the truth and the divinity of his work; we see that for its cause and for its principle we must go to heaven; and who will venture to say, after all the traits we have set before the reader, that the Reformation was a matter of policy? No, indeed, it was not the effect of the policy of men, but that of the power of God. Had Luther been actuated by human passions only, he would have given way to his fears; his mistaken calculations and his scruples would have quenched the flame that had been kindled in his soul, so that it could only have cast a passing gleam upon the Church, as had been the case with so many men of zeal and piety whose names have come down to us. But now God's time was come; the work was not to be stopped. The deliverance of the Church

¹ Et cum omnia argumenta superassem per scripturas, hoc unum cum summa difficultate et angustia, tandem Christo favente, vix superavi, Ecclesiam scilicet esse audiendam. (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 49.)

from bondage was about to be accomplished. Luther was at least to prepare this complete enfranchisement, and those vast developments promised to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Accordingly he experienced the truth of that magnificent promise: *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail. But they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.* That same divine power which filled the heart of the doctor of Wittemberg, and which had thrown him into the conflict, soon restored to him all his first resolution.

VII. Luther had been discouraged by the fearfulness or the silence of his friends, but, as often happens, the attacks of his enemies produced on him an opposite effect. The adversaries of the truth, while believing that by their violence they were doing their own work, were doing in fact the work of God.¹ Tetzel took up, though with a feeble hand, the gauntlet that had been thrown down to him, and, in his first reply, attacked the sermon preached by Luther, and which was meant for the people, just as the theses had been meant for the learned. That discourse he attempted to refute point by point, and in his own manner; he then announced that he was preparing to give ampler battle to his adversary in certain theses which he was to maintain at Frankfort on the Oder. "Then," said he, replying by these words to the conclusion of Luther's sermon, "then every one will be able to recognise which is the heresiarch, the heretic, the schismatic, the man guilty of error, rashness, and calumny. Then will it appear to the eyes of all, who it is that has a gloomy brain, who it is that has never felt the force of the Bible, or read Christian doctrines, or understood his own doctors. In maintaining the positions I advance, I am ready to suffer all things, imprisonment, beating, water, and fire. . . ."

One thing strikes us in reading this writing of Tetzel's, and that is, the difference between the German he employs and that of Luther. One would say that they were separated by an interval of ages. A foreigner, in particular, finds it difficult at times to make out Tetzel's meaning, while the language of

¹ Hi furores Tetzelii et ejus satellitum imponunt necessitatem Luthero de rebus iisdem copiosius disserendi et tuendæ veritatis. (Melancht. Vita. Luth.)

Luther is throughout almost entirely that of our own days. We have only to compare their writings together to be convinced that Luther is the father of the German tongue; doubtless one of his least merits, still it is one.

Luther replied without naming Tetzel, Tetzel not having named him. But not a reader in Germany but knew well what names should have appeared on the title of these publications, however they might think proper not to mention them. Tetzel endeavoured to confound the repentance required by God with the penance imposed by the church, for the purpose of enhancing the value of his indulgences. Luther strove to throw light on this point.

"To avoid many words," says he in his picturesque language, "I give to the wind, which by the bye has more spare time than I have, his other words, which are mere paper flowers and withered leaves, and confine myself to the examination of the bases of his edifice of burs.

"The penance imposed by the holy father cannot be the repentance required by Jesus Christ, for what the holy father imposes, he may dispense with exacting; and if these two penitences were one and the same thing, it would follow that the holy father removes what Jesus Christ requires, and that he violates God's commandments." . . . "Ah, if he think proper, let him treat me ill," continues Luther, after having quoted other false interpretations of Tetzel, "let him call me heretic, schismatic, calumniator, in short, whatever he pleases; I shall not on that account be his enemy, and I shall pray for him as for a friend.

. . . But it is not possible that he should be suffered to treat Holy Scripture, our consolation, (Rom. xv. 4.) as a sow would treat a sack of oats."¹

We must accustom ourselves to Luther's occasional employment of expressions which are harsh and too homely to suit the taste of our age: it was the usual practice of that time, and we commonly find under those expressions, however they may shock the proprieties of language in our days, a force and a justness that make us forgive their tartness.²

¹ Dass er die Schrift, unsern Trost, nicht anders behandelt wie die Sau einen Habersack.

² Add to this coarseness in his expressions, occasional want of consideration

“He who buys indulgences, our adversaries farther say, does better than he who gives alms to a poor man, not reduced to absolute want. Now, supposing word were brought that the Turks are profaning our churches and our crosses; we might learn this without shuddering at the thought, for we have Turks among us who are a hundred times worse, who profane and annihilate the only true sanctuary, the Word of God, which sanctifies all things. . . . Let him who would follow this precept, take care not to give to eat to him who is hungry, or to clothe him who is naked, until they give up the ghost, and consequently have no farther need of his assistance.”

It is well that we should compare this zeal on Luther's part for good works, with what he says on justification by faith. We shall only add that whoever has had any experience, and any knowledge of Christianity, has no need of this new proof of a truth, the evidence of which he already acknowledges: namely, that the more a man cleaves to justification by faith, the more, likewise, does he own the necessity of good works, and the more does he practise them; while loose views of the doctrine of faith are necessarily followed by a relaxation in the practice of good works. Luther, before him St. Paul, after him Howard, are proofs of the former assertion. All men without faith, and the world is full of them, are proofs of the latter.

Coming then to the subject of Tetzel's insult, Luther repays him, in his own manner, in kind. “When hearing these invectives,” says he, “I seem to be listening to some great ass braying at me. I am delighted with them and should feel very sad, were such people to say, I was a good Christian.”

in what he wrote, giving rise to apparent inconsistencies in some parts of his writings. These though apparent only, when combined with that really gradual illumination of Luther's mind which led him, on receiving farther light, to reject altogether what he had held in earlier life, might supply matter for that well known satire, the *Gospel Weathercock*, in which various examples of Luther's self-contradictions are sneeringly exhibited. It is scandalous beyond measure that in these days of so much general intelligence, this work should be reproduced by ignorant persons, who are encouraged in nothing else, nay, who are not allowed to say a word when people think they can receive better instruction elsewhere, and that the coarseness and inconsistency of Luther's sayings and writings should alone be mentioned, while not a word is introduced of those glowing and splendid expressions of his, which reveal to us the inmost feelings of his heart, and with these its thorough honesty and high-toned principle. Of these, however, many examples are most appropriately introduced in this work of M. Merle.—L. R.

We must give Luther as he is, with all his weaknesses. This turn for pleasantry, and gross pleasantry too, was one of these. The Reformer was undoubtedly a great man, a man of God, still he was a man, not an angel, nor was he even a perfect man. Who has any right to demand that he should be perfect?

“As for what remains,” he adds, provoking his adversaries to give him battle, “albeit that for such points it is not usual to burn people, here I am at Wittenberg, I doctor Martin Luther! Is there any inquisitor that pretends to eat iron and to toss rocks into the air? I give him to wit, that he has a safe-conduct to come hither, the gates open, and bed and board provided for him, and all by the gracious care of the praise-worthy prince, duke Frederick, elector of Saxony, who never will protect heresy. . . . ¹”

It will be seen that Luther was never wanting in point of courage. He stayed himself on the Word of God, and that is a rock which a man may reckon upon never giving way in a storm. But God, in his faithfulness, brought him other aids besides, in circumstances which made them peculiarly needful. To the bursts of joy with which the multitude had welcomed the theses, there soon succeeded a moody silence; the learned had timidly retired on hearing the calumnies and insults of Tetzel and the Dominicans; the bishops, loud as had been their previous condemnation of the abuses of indulgences, seeing them at last assailed, failed not by a contradiction of which there are too many examples, to find the attack unseasonable at that time. The greater number of the Reformer's friends became alarmed; several had even fled; but when the first panic was over, men's minds took another direction; and the Wittenberg monk after having for some time stood alone in the Church, soon found himself again surrounded with many friends and approvers.

Among these there was one who, though timid, remained faithful to him throughout this crisis, and whose friendship was his comfort and stay. This friend was Spalatin. Their correspondence was not discontinued. “I thank you,” he says to him, referring to a particular mark of friendship which he had just received from him; “but what do I not owe you?”² It was on

¹ Lutheri Opera Leips. xvii. 132.

² Tibi gratias ago: imo quid tibi non debeo? (L. Epp. i. p. 74.)

11th Nov. 1517, eleven days after the publication of the theses; and hence, no doubt, at the very moment when the ferment of men's minds was at the greatest, that Luther loved thus to pour forth his gratitude into the heart of his friend. It is interesting to see how in this same letter to Spalatin, the sturdy man who had just done a deed that required the greatest courage, declares what the source was whence he derived his strength. "We can do nothing of ourselves; we can do all things by the grace of God. All ignorance is such as we can never overcome; there is no ignorance but what may be overcome by the grace of God. The more we struggle in our own strength to attain to wisdom, the more do we run into folly.¹ It is not true that this invincible ignorance excuses the sinner; for otherwise there would be no sin in the world."

Luther had not sent his propositions either to the prince or to any of his courtiers; an omission at which it appears that the chaplain had expressed to his friend some surprise. "I did not wish," replied Luther, "that my theses should reach our most illustrious prince, or any of his people, until those who think themselves pointed out in them should first have received them, lest they might think that I had published them by the prince's orders, or with the view of conciliating his favour, and out of opposition to the bishop of Maintz. I learn that there are several already who imagine such things. But I can now safely swear, that my theses were published without the knowledge of duke Frederick."²

And if Spalatin comforted his friend and aided him with his influence, Luther, on his side, endeavoured to answer the inquiries addressed to him by the modest chaplain. Among other questions, the latter put one which is often asked at the present day: "Which is the best method of studying Holy Scripture?"

"Hitherto," replied Luther, "you have asked me, most excellent Spalatin, such things only as were in my power. But to direct you in the study of the Holy Scriptures, is above my

¹ Quanto magis conamur ex nobis ad sapientiam, tanto amplius appropinquamus insipientiæ. (L. Epp. i. p. 74.)

² Sed saluum est nunc etiam jurare, quod sine scitu ducis Frederici exierint. (Ibid. p. 76.)

capacity If, however, you would like to know my own method I will not conceal it from you.

“First, it is most certain that no man can obtain a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures by mere force of study or of genius. What you have first to do, then, is to commence with prayer.¹ Entreat of God, that of his great mercy he would give you the true understanding of his word. There is no interpreter of the word of God other than the author himself of that word, according as it is written: *They shall all be taught of God*. Hope nothing from your labours, nothing from your understanding, but trust wholly to God, and to the influences of his Spirit. Believe a man who has made the trial.”² We here see how it was that Luther arrived at the possession of that truth of which he was the preacher. It was not, as some pretend, by trusting to the pride of reason; nor was it, as others insist, by delivering himself up to resentful passions. The purest, the holiest, the sublimest source of all, even God himself, applied to with humility, confidence, and prayer, was that from which he drew his knowledge. But few there be in our age who imitate him, and hence it is that few there be who comprehend him. These words of Luther in the view of a serious mind, are in themselves a justification of the Reformation.

Luther found consolation, likewise, in the friendship of some worthy laymen. Among these, Christopher Scheurl, the excellent secretary of the imperial city of Nuremberg, gave him affecting tokens of friendship.³ We all know how soothing to man’s heart, when he sees himself attacked on all sides, are testimonies of interest in his welfare; but not satisfied with giving him these, the Nuremberg secretary desired to gain for his friend a large accession of friends. He invited him to dedicate one of his works to a then celebrated lawyer of Nuremberg, called Jerome Ebner: “Thou hast a high idea of my studies,” Luther modestly replies; “but I have the very lowest. Never-

¹ Primum id certissimum est, sacras litteras non posse vel studio, vel ingenio penetrari. Ideo primum officium est ut ab oratione incipias.

² Igitur de tuo studio desperes oportet omnino, simul et ingenio. Deo autem soli confidas et influxui spiritus. Experto crede ista. (L. Epp. i. p. 88, of 18th January.)

³ Litteræ tuæ, Luther writes on the 11th December 1517, animum tuum erga meam parvitatem candidum et longe ultra merita benevolentissimum probaverunt. (L. Epp. i. p. 79.)

theless it has been my wish to comply with your desire. I have sought out. . . . But in all my store which I never found so paltry, nothing has turned up that has not appeared to me altogether unworthy of being dedicated to so great a man by one so little as myself." How affecting is this humility! It is no other than Luther that speaks, and it is with the doctor Ebner, whose very name is unknown to us, that he thus compares himself. Posterity has not confirmed this judgment.

Without having done anything in the way of giving general circulation to the theses, Luther had thought as little of sending them to Scheurl, as to the electors and his courtiers. The Nuremberg secretary expressed his surprise at this. "I did not at all design," he replied, "to give my theses any such publicity. All I wanted was to confer upon their contents with some of those who dwell with us or near us.¹ Had these condemned them, I would have destroyed them. Had they been approved of, I thought I might have them published. Now, however, they have been printed, reprinted, and disseminated, far beyond my hopes; so that I repent of that production;² not that I fear the truth being known to the people, for that was my sole object; but such is not the best method of giving people instruction. There are questions to be found in them which even to myself admit of doubt; and had I thought that my theses were to make such a sensation, some things I might have left out, and others I might have affirmed with a more entire assurance." Luther thought otherwise afterwards, when, far from thinking that he had said too much, he declared that he ought to have said a great deal more. Still, the apprehensions he expresses to Scheurl do honour to his sincerity; showing that he had not had any preconceived plan, was not influenced by party spirit, was by no means prepossessed in favour of his own opinions, and only sought for truth. When he had fully found it, he changed his language: "You will find in my first writings," says he many years afterwards, "that I most humbly yielded many things to the pope, and these, too, things of impor-

¹ Non fuit consilium neque votum eas evulgari, sed cum paucis apud et circum nos habitantibus primum super ipsis conferri. (L. Epp. i. p. 95.)

² Ut me pœniteat hujus fœturæ. (L. Epp. i. p. 95.)

tance, which I now regard and detest as abominable and blasphemous.”¹

Scheurl was not the only layman of consideration who then gave Luther marks of friendship. The famous painter Albert Durer, sent him a present, one of his paintings perhaps, and the doctor warmly expresses his gratitude upon the occasion.²

Thus did Luther realize in his own experience the truth of that word of the divine wisdom: *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.* But he was not forgetful of it with respect to others, and, indeed, pleaded the cause of his whole people. The elector had imposed one tax, and it was positively said that he was about to add another, probably as advised by Pffessinger, the prince's councillor, against whom Luther often launches expressions of great pungency. The doctor threw himself resolutely into the breach: “Let not your highness,” said he, “despise the prayer of a poor mendicant. I beseech of you in the name of God, not to appoint a new tax. I myself, as well as many of your most devoted subjects, have had our hearts crushed on seeing how much injury was done by the last, to the good name and popularity enjoyed by your highness. It is true that God has endowed you with a high order of understanding, so that in such matters you see farther than I can do, and, no doubt, farther than any of your subjects. But it may perhaps be God's will that a small capacity should instruct one that is great, in order that no one may confide in himself, but only in God our Saviour, and may He preserve your body in health for our good, and your soul for everlasting bliss. Amen.” Thus does the gospel, while it enjoins honour to be paid to kings, make the cause of the people to be pleaded also. It at once preaches its duties to the nation; and recalls the rights it possesses to the remembrance of the prince. The voice of a Christian, like Luther, causing itself to be heard in a sovereign's cabinet, might often take the place of a whole assembly of legislators.

In that same letter in which Luther addresses so severe a lesson to the elector, he is not afraid to prefer the request, or rather to recall the promise, of being presented with a new dress;

¹ Quæ istis temporibus pro summa blasphemia et abominatione habeo et execror. (L. Opp. lat. Wit. in præf.)

² Accepi . . . simul et donum insignis viri Alberti Durer. (L. Epp. i. p. 95.)

a freedom on Luther's part which at a moment when he might dread having offended Frederick, is no less honourable to the prince than to the reformer. "But if it be Pfeffinger that is charged with it," he adds, "let him give it me in reality, and not in protestations of friendship. For he right well knows how to weave fine words, but no good cloth comes out of them." Luther thought that the good counsels he had given his prince well deserved his court dress.¹ Be that as it may, two years after, as it had never come, he was still petitioning for it;² a fact from which apparently we may infer that Frederick was not so much at Luther's disposal as has been said.

VIII. Thus had men's minds gradually recovered from their first consternation. Luther himself was disposed to declare that his words had not the bearing that was attributed to them. New circumstances might divert the general attention, and the stroke that had been aimed at the Roman doctrines might finally lose itself in the air, as so many had done before. But the partisans of Rome prevented the matter from having such an issue, and fanned the flame instead of smothering it.

Tetzel and the Dominicans made a fierce reply to the attack made upon them. Eagerly bent on crushing the audacious monk who had thus disconcerted their traffic, and conciliated the favour of the Roman pontiff, they gave furious vent to their resentment; pretended that to attack the indulgence ordained by the pope, was to attack the pope himself; and called to their aid all the monks and theologians of their school.³ Tetzel was quite aware that an adversary like Luther was too much for him alone. So stunned was he by the doctor's attack, and, above all, so angry was he, that he left the environs of Wittemberg, and repaired to Frankfort on the Oder, where he had arrived so early as November 1517. Among the professors at the university of that city, was Conrad Wimpina, a man of much eloquence, and one of the most distinguished theologians of his time. Wimpina felt that his reputation was eclipsed by the doctor and university of Wittemberg, and regarded both with

¹ *Mein Hofkleid verdienen.* (Epp. L. i. p. 77, 78.)

² *Ibid.* p. 283.

³ *Suum senatum convocat; monachos aliquot et theologos sua sophistica utcunque tinctos.* (Melancht. Vita Lutheri.)

feelings of envy, when he was applied to by Tetzel to furnish an answer to the theses of Luther; and thereupon he wrote two series of anti-theses, of which one was meant as a defence of the doctrine of indulgences, and the other as a pleading for the authority of the pope.

On the 20th of January 1518, this disputation took place, after long previous preparation and much noisy announcement. Tetzel built the highest expectations upon it, and had beaten the alarm drum. Monks had been sent for from all the surrounding monasteries, and obeyed the summons by meeting to the number of above three hundred. Tetzel read aloud his theses, and so extravagant were they as even to contain the following words, “that whoever says that the soul does not soar out of purgatory the moment the money chinks at the bottom of the strong box, is in error.”¹

But what he chiefly sought was to establish propositions according to which the pope truly appeared *to sit as God in the temple of God*, as the apostle says. It well suited this bare-faced trafficker to fly for shelter with all his disorders, and all his scandals, under the mantle of the pope.

The following are some of the points which he declared himself ready to defend in presence of the numerous assembly by which he was surrounded:

3. “Christians should be taught that the pope, in virtue of his prerogative, is above the whole Church universal and the councils, and that people ought to obey his ordinances with all submission.

4. “Christians should be taught that the pope alone has right to decide in matters of Christian faith; that he alone has the power, and none but he, to explain the meaning of Holy Scripture according to the sense he attaches to it, and to approve or condemn all the words or works of others.

5. “Christians should be taught that the judgment of the pope in matters concerning the Christian faith, and which are necessary to the salvation of the human race, can nowise err.

6. “Christians should be taught that in matters relating to the

¹ Quisquis ergò dicit, non citius posse animam volare, quam in fundo cistæ denarius possit tinnire, errat. (Positiones fratris Joh. Tezelii, pos. 56. L. Opp. i. p. 94.)

faith, one ought to stay himself and repose on the sentiments entertained by the pope, as set forth in his judgments, more than on the sentiments of all wise men, as deduced by them from Scripture.

8. "Christians should be taught that those who assail the pope's honour or dignity, render themselves guilty of the crime of leze-majesty and merit malediction.

17. "Christians should be taught that there are many things which the Church regards as sure articles of universal truth, although to be found neither in the canon of Scripture nor in the ancient doctors.

44. "Christians should be taught that those ought to be accounted obstinate heretics who declare by their words, actions, or writings, that they would not retract their heretical propositions, were excommunications upon excommunications to be rained or hailed down upon them.

45. "Christians should be taught that those who protect the error of heretics, and who interpose their authority to prevent their being taken before the judge to whose jurisdiction they are amenable, are excommunicated; that if within the space of a year they abstain not from this course, they shall be declared infamous, and cruelly punished with many punishments according to the rules of law, and to the terror of all men.¹

50. "Christians should be taught that those who scribble over so many books and so much paper, who preach and dispute, publicly and mischievously, on the confession of the mouth, on the satisfaction of works, on the rich and great indulgences of the bishop of Rome, and on his power; that those who side with the men who preach or write such things, who delight in such writings, and who disseminate them among the people and in the world; that those, in fine, who secretly utter such things in a contemptible and shameless manner, ought all to tremble lest they should incur the penalties we have mentioned, and precipitate themselves and others with them, for the time coming, into everlasting damnation, and even in this world into deep disgrace. For if a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned."

¹ Pro infamibus sunt tenendi, qui etiam per juris capitula terribiliter multis vlectentur pœnis in omnium hominum terrorem. (L. Opp. i. p. 94.)

It will be perceived that Luther was not the sole object of Tetzels attack. In the 48th thesis he probably had the elector of Saxony in his eye. As for the rest, these propositions savoured strongly of the Dominicans; and to threaten all who might gainsay them with cruel punishments, was truly an inquisitor's argument, to which there could not well be any means of replying. The three hundred monks that Tetzels had gathered round him, stared with admiration at all that he said, and the university theologians were too much afraid of being ranked among the favourers of heresy, or were too much attached to Wimpina's principles, frankly to attack the astounding theses thus announced to them.

After all the noise it had created, the whole affair accordingly seemed about to end in a mere sham fight; but among the crowd of students who stood by, there was a youth about twenty years old, called John Knipstrow, who had read Luther's theses, and had found that they accorded with the doctrines of Scripture. Indignant at seeing the truth publicly trampled under foot, without any to stand up in its defence, this young man raised his voice, to the astonishment of the whole meeting, and attacked the presumptuous Tetzels. Little reckoning on any such opposition, the crest-fallen Dominican was sadly disconcerted, and after some efforts of his own, quitted the field, leaving Wimpina to take his place. The latter showed a more vigorous resistance, but was at length so closely pressed by Knipstrow, that to put an end to a contest in his eyes so inconvenient, Wimpina, as president, declared the discussion closed; and without farther debate, proceeded to confer the degree of doctor on Tetzels, as his recompense for so glorious a contest. That he might rid himself of the young orator, Wimpina had him sent off to the monastery of Pyritz in Pomerania, with orders that he should be strictly watched. But this rising light was removed from the banks of the Oder, only that he might afterwards diffuse a great degree of illumination in Pomerania.¹ God when he sees fit, employs scholars to confound doctors.

Anxious to repair the check he had received, Tetzels had recourse to the *ultima ratio* of Rome and the inquisitors—fire.

¹ Spieker, Gesch. Dr. M. Luther's Beckmani Notitia Uni. Francofurti. viii. &c.

On one of the public walks in the suburbs of Frankfort, he had a pulpit and a bonfire prepared, and went in solemn procession to the spot, with the insignia of the inquisitors of the faith. From the pulpit thus prepared, he gave full vent to his fury, thundering forth his denunciations, and calling out at the top of his powerful voice, that the heretic Luther should be consigned to the flames, into which he forthwith threw the doctor's propositions and sermon.¹ It was far easier to do thus than to defend his own theses, and this time he found no one to gainsay him or to dispute his victory. The impudent Dominican re-entered Frankfort in triumph. When powerful parties sustain a defeat, they have recourse to certain demonstrations with which we must allow them to indulge themselves, as their sole consolation for disgrace.

Tetzel's second theses form an important epoch of the Reformation. They changed the ground of discussion by transferring it from the indulgence market into the halls of the Vatican, and by turning it from Tetzel against the pope. In fact, they substituted the sacred person of the chief of the Church, for the despicable money-broker, with whom Luther had engaged in close personal conflict. Luther was amazed at this. He might probably have taken this step of his own accord some time later, but his enemies had saved him the trouble; and from that time forth, it was no longer a decried traffic that was called in question, but Rome itself. The blow aimed by a bold hand at Tetzel's money-shop, now shook to its foundations the very throne of the pontiff-king.

As for the rest, Tetzel's theses were a mere signal for the rising of the whole troop of Rome. A shout against Luther arose from among the monks, who were maddened to fury at the sight of a still more formidable adversary than ever Erasmus or Reuchlin had been. Luther's name resounded from the pulpits of the Dominicans, and from these, addressing themselves to the passions of the people, they denounced the brave doctor as an insensate person, a seducing spirit, and one possessed by the devil. They decried his doctrine as the most

¹ Fulmina in Lutherum torquet; vociferatur ubique hunc hereticum igni perdendum esse: propositiones etiam Lutheri et concionem de indulgentiis publice conjecit in flammam. (Melancht. Vita Lutheri.)

horrible heresy. "Wait but a fortnight, or a month at the most," said they, "and this noted heretic will be burnt." And, sure enough, had it depended on the Dominicans, the lot of Huss and of Jerome would soon have been that of the Saxon doctor. But God watched over him. His life was destined to accomplish that which the ashes of Huss had commenced; for each had his part in the work of God,—the one by his life, the other by his death. Many exclaimed that the entire university of Wittenberg was tainted with heresy, and pronounced it infamous.¹ "Let us prosecute this wicked wretch," they continued, "and all his followers." Nor did such a hubbub fail in many places to rouse the passions of the people; all who shared in the Reformer's opinions were pointed out to public notice; and wherever the monks formed the stronger party, the friends of the Gospel experienced the effects of their hatred. Then began to be accomplished for the Reformation that prophecy of the Saviour: *Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you, falsely for my sake.* That retribution is never wanting in this world to the decided disciples of the Gospel.

No sooner was Luther aware of these theses of Tetzels, and of the general attack of which they were the signal, than his courage rose; in the full conviction that such adversaries ought to be met, face to face, his intrepid soul felt no difficulty in resolving that this should be done. But at the same time their weakness revealed to him his strength, and made him conscious of his powers.

Yet he was far from giving way to those movements of pride which are so natural to the heart of man. "I find it more difficult," says he in writing to Spalatin at this period, "to keep myself from despising my opponents, and thus sinning against Jesus Christ, than I should find it to vanquish them. So ignorant are they of things human and divine, that it is a disgrace to have such persons to contend with. And yet it is this very ignorance that gives them their inconceivable audacity and their brow of brass."² But what more than anything else put

¹ *Eo furunt usquē, ut Universitatem Wittenbergensem propter me infamem conantur facere et hereticam.* (L. Epp. i. p. 92.)

² Epp. Luth. i. p. 92.

courage into his heart amid this universal outburst of angry feeling, was his profound conviction that his cause was that of truth. We find him writing to Spalatin at the beginning of the year 1518: "Be not at all amazed at my being so insulted. Were it not that people cursed me, we could not be so firmly assured that the cause I have undertaken is that of God himself.¹ Christ has been set for a sign to be spoken against." "I know," he adds, "that the Word of God from the very beginning, has been of such a nature that whoever has chosen to bear it in the world, has been necessitated, like the apostles, to forsake all things and look for death. Were it not so, it would not be the Word of Jesus Christ."² This peace in the midst of trouble, is a thing unknown to the heroes of the world. We see men placed at the head of a government, or of a political party, sinking under their labours and fatigues. But the Christian ordinarily acquires new strength in the struggle; and this, because he knows of a mysterious source of repose and courage, of which the man whose eyes are shut to the Gospel, is altogether ignorant.

One thing, however, sometimes disquieted Luther: it was the thought of the disagreements in sentiment which his courageous opposition might produce. He knew that a word might set the world in a flame. He sometimes saw prince opposed to prince, and nation to nation; his German heart grew sad at the prospect, and his Christian charity took alarm at it. He could have wished for peace; but it behoved him to speak out, for such was the Lord's will. "I tremble," said he, "I shudder at the thought of my causing discord among such great princes."³

He still maintained silence on Tetzels propositions concerning the pope. Had he been hurried away by passion, doubtless he would have thrown himself without hesitation, and with all his force, on the confounding doctrine under shelter of which his opponent had endeavoured to screen himself. He refrained from doing so; and there is in his delay, his reserve, his silence,

¹ Nisi maledicerer, non crederem ex Deo esse quæ tracto. (Luth. Epp. i. p. 85.)

² Morte emptum est (Verbum Dei), he continues in words full of energy, mortibus vulgatum, mortibus servatum, mortibus quoque servandum aut referendum est.

³ Inter tantos principes dissidii origo esse, valde horreo et timeo. (L. Epp. i. p. 93.)

something grave and solemn which sufficiently reveals the spirit that animated him. He waited, but not from weakness; for the blow, when given, was only the more vigorous.

After his auto-da-fé of Frankfort on the Oder, Tetzel lost no time in sending his theses into Saxony, where he hoped they would serve as an antidote to those of Luther. An agent was despatched from Halle to Wittemberg, with instructions from the inquisitor as to the distribution of his propositions. But the university students, still indignant at Tetzel's having burnt their master's theses, no sooner heard of the man's arrival than they sought him out, surrounded him, pushed him about, and frightened him: "How dare you bring such things here?" said they; some, meanwhile, bought part of the copies; others laid violent hands on the remainder, thus dispossessing him of his entire stock, which consisted of eight hundred copies. Next, without the knowledge of the elector, senate, rector, Luther, or of any of the professors,¹ they placarded these words on the most conspicuous parts of the university buildings: "Whoever desires to be present at the burning and funeral ceremony of Tetzel's theses, may come to the market place at two o'clock."

At that hour and place they met in a crowd, and, amid the loudest acclamations, delivered the Dominican's propositions to the flames. One copy escaped, which falling into Luther's hands, he afterwards sent to his friend Lange, at Erfurt. These generous but imprudent youths had followed the precept of those of the old time who said, *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, not that of Jesus Christ. But after the example set by the doctors and professors of Frankfort, can we wonder at its being followed by the juvenile students at Wittemberg? The news of this academical execution spread throughout Germany, and made a great noise there.² To Luther it was a subject of much distress.

"I am amazed," he wrote to his old master Jodocus, at Erfurt, "that you could have believed that it was I that ordered the burning of Tetzel's theses. Think you, then, that I am thus far out of my mind? But what could I do in that matter?"

¹ Hæc inscio principe, senatu, rectore, denique omnibus nobis. (L. Epp. i. p. 99.)

² Fit ex ea re ingens undique fabula. (L. Epp. i. p. 99.)

When I am in question, all believe everybody in everything.¹ Can I tie the tongues of the whole world? Well then! let them say, hear, see, and pretend what they please. I will act to the utmost of the strength that the Lord shall give me, and with God's help never will I fear anything." "What is to be the issue," says he to Lange, "I know not, unless it be that the danger to which I am exposed thereby becomes much greater."² From the above incident we may perceive how much the hearts of the young were already inflamed in favour of the cause which was defended by Luther—a token this of the utmost importance; for a movement that takes place in the youth of a country, is sure to pass ere long into the entire nation.

Slight as was the estimation in which the theses of Tetzel and Wimpina were held, still they produced a certain effect. They enlarged the ground of dispute, they farther widened the rent that had been made in the Church's mantle, they launched into the quarrel questions of the very highest importance, so that the chiefs of the Church began to look more closely into the matter, and to pronounce themselves strongly against the Reformer. "Truly, I know not who it is that Luther trusts to," said the bishop of Brandenburg, "that he dares thus to attack the power of the bishops." As he thought that this new circumstance called for new proceedings on his part, the bishop went himself to Wittenberg, and there found Luther animated with that inward joy which a good conscience imparts, and fully resolved to enter into the controversy. Perceiving that the Augustinian monk was obeying a higher authority than he could pretend to, he went back, not a little angry, to Brandenburg. As he sat one day at the fireside, during the winter of 1518, turning to those about him, he said: "I cannot lay my head down in peace until I have thrown Martin into the fire, as I throw this brand," on which he tossed into the grate the faggot he had in his hand. The revolution of the sixteenth century was no more to be accomplished by the chiefs of the Church, than that of the first century had been accomplished by the sanhedrim and the synagogue. In the sixteenth century, the chiefs of the clergy opposed Luther, and the Reforma-

¹ *Omnes omnibus omnia credunt de me.* (L. Epp. i. p. 109.)

² L. Epp. i. v. 98.

tion and its ministers, as they had opposed Jesus Christ the Gospel and its apostles, and as they have too often at all times opposed the truth. "The bishops," says Luther, speaking of the visit he had received from the Brandenburg prelate, "begin to perceive that they ought to have done what I am now doing, and hence they are ashamed. They call me proud and audacious, nor do I deny that I am so. But they are not the people to know what God is, and what we are." ¹

IX. A more serious resistance than that of Tetzels was now opposed to Luther. Rome herself replied, and it was from the walls of the sacred palace that this answer went forth. Not that Leo X. had taken it into his head to speak on points of theology: "A squabble among monks," said he one day; "the best way is to let it alone." And at another time: "Some drunken German has written these theses; when the effects of the wine are over, he will speak very differently."² A Roman Dominican, Sylvester Prierias, master of the sacred palace, exercised the functions of censor, and in virtue of his office, was the first in Italy to become acquainted with the theses of the Saxon monk.

A Roman censor and the theses of Luther—what a meeting! Freedom of speech, free inquiry, and religious liberty thus came into collision, in the city of Rome, with the power which pretends to hold in its own hands the monopoly of mind, and to open or shut at will the mouth of Christendom. The struggle of Christian liberty which produces the children of God, with the pontifical despotism which produces the slaves of Rome, is symbolised, as it were, from the very dawn of the Reformation, in this meeting of Luther and Prierias.

The Roman censor, prior-general of the Dominicans, charged with the power of deciding what Christendom ought to say or to suppress, what it ought to know and of what it ought to remain ignorant, hastened to reply. He published a piece of writing, which he dedicated to Leo X., and in which he speaks contemptuously of the German monk, declaring with a self-sufficiency altogether Roman, that he felt curious to know whether this Luther had an iron nose or a brazen head, so that it could not

¹ Quid vel Deus vel ipsi sumus. (L. Epp. i. 224.)

² Ein voller trunkener Deutscher. (L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1337.)

be broken!¹ . . . He then attacked Luther's theses in the form of a dialogue, employing by turns, sneers, insults, and threats.

This contest between the Wittemberg Augustinian and the Roman Dominican, involved the very question which is the principle of the Reformation, to wit: What is the Christian's sole infallible authority? The following is the system of the Church as set forth by one of its most independent organs.²

The letter of the written word is dead, without the spirit of interpretation which alone can give the knowledge of its hidden meaning. Now, this spirit is not given to every Christian, but to the Church, that is, to the priests. It shows great rashness to pretend that He who has promised to the Church to be with it always even to the end of the world, could have abandoned it to the power of error. It will perhaps be said, that the doctrine and the constitution of the Church, are not such as are found in the sacred oracles. No doubt this is true; but the change is apparent only; formal, not fundamental. Still more; it is a change that denotes progression. The life-giving power of the divine Spirit has given a reality to that which in Scripture is merely ideal; it has given a body to what the Word had only sketched; it has given the last touch to its rough attempts; it has finished the work of which the Bible furnished the first rudiments only. We must therefore take the meaning of Holy Scripture as it has been determined by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.³ Here catholic doctors are divided.

¹ An ferreum nasum aut caput æneum gerat iste Lutherus, ut effringi non possit. (Sylv. Prieratis Dialogus.)

² See Joh. Gersonis Propositiones de sensu litterali S. Scripturæ. (Opp. tom. i.)

³ Such is the old song which the advocates of Rome are now repeating: "Christ can never have allowed his Church to fall under the power of error. Hence he has established a visible supremacy in his Church, farther to explain and to complete his words, and which, in doing this, is infallibly directed by the Holy Ghost." And if proof be required, all we can find is, that thus men in their wisdom have thought fit that it should be, and imagine they can prove that thus it was, and that in such-wise Jesus must have acted, without, however, being able to produce a particle of historical evidence that he really found it good so to do; which evidence, meanwhile, is essentially requisite in order to our being assured of the fact. Hence, as happens when men more narrowly inquire with whom that supremacy resides, they split into opposing parties, some looking for that supremacy in church-councils and others in the pope. The truth is, it is to be found no where, but is a pure invention of human wisdom, whereas Jesus knows how to provide for the preservation of the truth in a totally different manner.—L. R.

Councils general, say some, and Gerson was of the number, represent the Church. The pope, said others, is the depository of the spirit of interpretation, and nobody is entitled to put a different sense on Scripture from that fixed by the Roman high-priest. This was the view taken by Prierias.

Such was the doctrine with which the master of the sacred palace opposed the rising Reformation; advancing propositions on the power of the Church and of the pope, such as might have put the most shameless flatterers of the court of Rome to the blush. Among other points he lays down the following at the head of his publication: "Whoever rests not on the doctrine of the Roman Church, and the Roman pontiff, as the infallible rule of faith, from which Holy Scripture itself derives its force and its authority, is an heretic."¹

Next, an attempt is made to refute the doctor's propositions, in a dialogue in which Luther and Sylvester are the interlocutors. The Saxon monk's opinions were quite a new thing to a Roman censor, and here, accordingly, Prierias shows equal ignorance of the emotions of Luther's heart and of the motives of his conduct. He measures the teacher of the truth by the petty standard of the valets of Rome. "Ah, my dear Luther," he says to him, "should you receive from our Lord the pope, a good bishoprick and a plenary indulgence for the reparation of your church, you would spin more softly and even preach up the indulgence which you are now pleased to blacken!" With all his pride in the elegance of his manners, the Italian at times adopts the coarsest tone: "If it be natural for dogs to bite," says he to Luther, "I much fear you must have had a dog for your father."² The Dominican is at last almost astonished at his own condescension in having addressed a rebel monk, and winds up by showing his adversary the savage teeth of an inquisitor. "The Roman Church," says he, "which in the person of the pope has the keystone of her spiritual and temporal power, can employ the secular arm in constraining those who having first received the faith, afterwards depart from it. She is under

¹ A quâ etiam sacra Scriptura robur trahit et auctoritatem, hæreticus est. (fundamentum tertium.)

² Si mordere canum est proprium, vereor ne tibi pater canis fuerit. (Sylvestri Prieratis Dialog.)

no obligation to employ argument in combatting and vanquishing rebels.”¹

These words, traced by the pen of one of the dignitaries of the Roman court, bore a meaning that no one could mistake, but they were far from intimidating Luther. He believed, or feigned to believe, that the dialogue was the production, not of Prierias, but of Ulrich of Hütten, or of one of the authors of the *Letters of some obscure men*, who, said he, in his turn for satire and to excite Luther against Prierias, must have compiled such a parcel of absurdities! Nevertheless, after remaining silent for some time, his doubts, if he ever had any, were removed: he set himself to work, and in two days his answer was ready.²

The Bible formed the Reformer and originated the Reformation. Luther had no need of the Church’s testimony in order to his believing, for his faith flowed from the Bible itself,—from within, not from without. So profoundly convinced was he that the evangelical doctrines were immovably founded on the Word of God, that all external authority was in his eyes useless. Luther’s experience in this respect opened up a new prospect to the church, and the fountain of living water which had gushed forth for the revival of the monk of Wittemberg, was about to become a stream which should quench the thirst of whole nations.³

In order to the understanding of the Word, said the Church, the Spirit of God must enable us to comprehend its meaning; and so far she was in the right. But her error lay in considering the Holy Spirit as a monopoly granted to a certain caste, and in imagining that the Spirit could be confined exclusively to assemblies, colleges, a city, or a conclave. *The wind bloweth where it listeth*, said the Son of God in speaking of the Spirit of God; and on another occasion, *they shall ALL be taught of God*. The corruption of the Church, the ambition of the pontiffs, the passions of the councils, the quarrels of the clergy, the pomp of the prelates, had banished far from sacerdotal dwellings that Holy Spirit,

¹ *Seculari brachio potest eos compescere, nec tenetur rationibus certare ad vincendos protrivientes. (Sylvestri Prieratis Dialog.)*

² *Convenit inter nos, esse personatum aliquem Sylvestrem ex obscuris viris, qui tantas ineptias in hominem luserit ad provocandum me adversus eum. (Epp. i. p. 87, of 14th Jan.)*

³ T. I. Witt. lat. p. 170.

that breath of humility and of peace. He had forsaken the assemblies of the proud and the palaces of the princes of the Church, and had retired among simple Christians and modest priests. He had shunned a lordly hierarchy which often shed the blood of the poor while trampling them under foot; he had shunned, too, a haughty and ignorant clergy whose chiefs knew how to use, not the Bible, but the sword; and he was to be found sometimes in despised sects, sometimes in men of mind and learning. The holy cloud which had departed from sumptuous temples and proud cathedrals, had descended upon the obscure abodes of the humble, or upon closets for study,—the calm witnesses of conscientious toil.¹ Degraded by her fondness for power and wealth, and dishonoured in the people's eyes by the venal use she made of the doctrine of life, the Church that sold salvation for treasures that were speedily squandered on her idle shows and her debaucheries, had lost all respect, and sensible men no longer attached any value to her testimony. In their contempt for an authority which had become so vile, they gladly turned towards the divine Word and its infallible authority, as towards the sole refuge that remained to them amid the general disorder.

The age, then, was in a state of preparation. The bold movement by which Luther changed the resting-place of the greatest hopes of man's heart, and with a mighty hand transferred these from the walls of the Vatican to the rock of the Word of God, was greeted with enthusiasm. This was the task which Luther proposed to himself in his reply to Prierias.

He paid no attention to the fundamental points which the Dominican had placed at the head of his work; "But," said he, "following your example, I too desire to lay down some fundamental principles."

"The first is the word of St. Paul:" "*Though an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*"

¹ Yes, it is even so. It is most true that an infallible guidance on the part of the Holy Spirit is necessary to the right understanding of the Word of Jesus and to the thorough distinguishing betwixt truth and error. It is, also, plainly promised by him to his Church. But to what Church? To those who truly constitute the Church, who attach themselves in all sincerity to Him as the only Head, the lowly and often the despised; these may be assured of being guided in the truth.—L. R.

"The second is that passage of St. Augustine to St. Jerome;" "I have learned to render to the canonical books alone the honour of most firmly believing that none of them has erred: as for others, I do not believe what they say merely because they say it."

Here, then, Luther lays down, with a firm hand, the essential doctrine of the Reformation: the Word of God, the whole Word of God, nothing but the Word of God. "If you well understand these points," he continues, "you will at the same time perceive that the whole of your Dialogue is subverted from top to bottom; for you have done nothing but put forward the opinions of St. Thomas," (Aquinas). Then, attacking his adversary's axioms, he frankly declares that in his opinion popes and councils may err. He complains of the flatteries of the Roman courtiers, who attributed both powers to the pope. He declares that the Church exists virtually in Christ only, and representatively only in a council.¹ Coming then to the motives Prierias had imputed to him: "No doubt, (says he,) you judge of me according to yourself; but were it so that I aspired to being a bishop, certainly I should not hold the language that sounds so ill in your ears. Think you I am ignorant how bishoprics and the priesthood are obtained at Rome? Don't the very children sing out in all parts of that city the well known words:

"Bad though the place from which you come,
You'll something filthier find at Rome.'" ²

Such was one of the rhymes sung at Rome, previous to the election of one of the last of the popes. Yet Luther speaks of Leo with expressions of esteem, "I know," says he, "that in him we have, as it were, a Daniel in Babylon; his innocence has often put his life in danger." He ends by saying some words in reply to the threats of Prierias: "Finally, you say that the pope is at once pontiff and emperor, and that he is mighty for suppression by the secular arm. Do you thirst for murder? Let me tell you; you will not intimidate me, either by your

¹ Ego ecclesiam virtualiter non scio nisi in Christo, representativè non nisi in concilio. (L. Opp. lat. p. 174.)

² Quando hæc pueri in omnibus plateis urbis cantant. Denique nunc facta est. . . . fœdissima Roma. (L. Opp. lat., p. 174.)

rhodomontades or by the menacing tone of your words. Were I to be slain, Christ still lives, Christ my Lord and the Lord of all, blessed for evermore. Amen.”¹

Thus did Luther, with unfaltering hand, set over against the infidel altar of the popedom, the altar of the Word of God, that Word which alone is holy, alone infallible, before which he would have every one bow the knee, and upon which he declares his willingness to immolate his life.

Soon a new adversary presented himself in the lists, and he, too, was a Dominican. This was James Hochstraten, the Cologne Inquisitor, whom we have already seen opposing Reuchlin and the friends of literature, and who now gnashed his teeth at the hardihood displayed by Luther. Indeed the skulking fanaticism of the monkish orders, could not fail to come into collision with the man who was destined to give them their death blow. Monachism arose as primitive truth was beginning to decline; ever since which time, monks and errors had alike increased. The man who was to hasten their downfall had appeared; but these stout champions could not abandon the field without engaging with him in a stubborn contest. The struggle ceased only with his life; but it is in Hochstraten that that struggle is particularly personified. Hochstraten and Luther: the Christian free and strong, and the fierce and sullen slave of monkish superstitions! Hochstraten waxes angry and impetuous, loudly insisting that the heretic should die. . . . It is by the flames that he will have Rome to triumph. “It is a crime of high treason against the Church,” he exclaims, “to allow so horrible a heretic to live an hour longer. Let a stake be made ready for him immediately!” This bloody counsel was, alas! but too well followed in many countries; the voice of numerous martyrs, as in the early times of the church, bore witness to the truth in the midst of the flames. But sword and flame were called for in vain against Luther. The angel of the Lord encamped about him and guarded him continually.

In replying to Hochstraten Luther’s words, though few, were full of energy: “Go to,” says he at the close, “thou murderous dotard, whose thirst for the blood of thy brethren is insatiable; my sincere desire is that thou beware of calling me a Christian,

¹ Si occider, vivit Christus, Dominus meus et omnium. (L. Opp. lat., p. 186.)

or one of the faithful, and that thou cease not, on the contrary, to call me a heretic. Understand these things well, bloody man! enemy of the truth! and if in the madness of thy rage, thou shalt attempt anything against me, take care that thou doest act circumspectly and choose well thy time. God knows what I propose to myself if he grant me life. . . . My hope and expectation, if God please, will not disappoint me.”¹ Hochstraten held his peace.

A more painful attack awaited the Reformer. The famed theses had found their way into the hands of Dr. Eck, the celebrated professor at Ingoldstadt, the liberator of Urban Regius and Luther's friend. Now, although Eck was not the man to defend the abuses of the indulgences, still he was a doctor of the school not of the Bible; he was deeply read in the scholastic writers, not in the Word of God. If Prierias represented Rome and Hochstraten the monks, Eck represented the School;² and that, after lording it over Christendom for about five centuries, far from succumbing under the first blows given by the Reformer, proudly rose with the intention of crushing the man who had dared to overwhelm it with contempt. Eck and Luther, the School and the Word, more than once came into collision, but now it was that the struggle commenced in earnest.

Eck could not fail to find many of Luther's assertions erroneous, nor are we obliged to doubt the sincerity of his convictions when he did so. He enthusiastically defended the opinions of the schoolmen as Luther had defended the declarations of the Word of God. We may even suppose that he was somewhat pained to feel himself obliged to oppose his old friend; yet, looking to the style of his attack, it would seem that passion and jealousy were no strangers to his determination.

He gave the name of *Obelisks* to his remarks on Luther's theses, and wishing at first to save appearances, instead of publishing his work, he thought it might suffice to communicate it confidentially to his ordinary, the bishop of Eichstädt. But

¹ L. Opp. (Leips.) xvii. 140.

² By “the School” we must understand the learned of that time, not those of whom Reuchlin and Erasmus were the harbingers, but those who remained attached to the old scholastic philosophy of the middle ages, and who expounded theology on its principles. They were called schoolmen, and their system that of the school.—L. R.

the Obelisks, whether from the indiscretion of the bishop, or from that of the doctor, were soon circulated everywhere, and a copy fell into the hands of Luther's friend, Link, preacher at Nuremberg. Link lost no time in sending it to the Reformer. As a formidable antagonist Eck was a very different person from Tetzel, Prierias, and Hochstraten, and the more his attack excelled theirs in learning and subtilty, the more was he dangerous. He adopted a compassionate tone towards his "feeble adversary," knowing well that pity is more mischievous than anger. He insinuated that Luther's propositions diffused the Bohemian poison, that they smelt of Bohemia, and by his malignant allusions he endeavoured to involve their author in all the ill will and hatred, then attached in Germany to the name of Huss and his country's schismatics.

Luther felt indignant at the mischievous spirit displayed in this production; but still more keenly did he feel the blow, as coming from an old friend. It thus appeared that in defending the truth, he must be content to lose the affection of those who were attached to him. Luther gave vent to his vexation and sorrow in a letter to Egranus, pastor at Zwickau. "In the Obelisks," says he, "I am called a venomous person, a Bohemian, a heretic, a seditious person, an insolent, a rash * * * I omit milder insults, such as, a sleepy fellow, an imbecile, an ignorant, a despiser of the sovereign pontiff, and so forth. The book teems with the grossest insults. The man, meanwhile, who has written it, is a distinguished person, of a mind replete with learning, and of learning replete with mind, and what pains me most, a man who was previously connected with me by a close and recent friendship,¹ no less than John Eck, doctor in theology, chancellor of Ingoldstädt, a man who has acquired lustre and celebrity by his writings. Were I not aware of Satan's thoughts, I should feel astonished at the frenzy that has led this person to break up a friendship so very pleasant and so new;² and that without warning, without writing, without saying a word."

But crushed as was Luther's heart, his courage was by no

¹ Et quod magis urit, antea mihi magnâ recenterque contractâ amicitia conjunctus. (L. Epp. i. p. 100.)

² Quo furore ille amicitias recentissimas et jucundissimas solveret. (Ibid.)

means shaken. On the contrary he nerved himself for the combat. "Rejoice thou my brother," says he to Egranus, who also had been attacked by a violent enemy, "rejoice thou, and let not these leaves that fly about frighten you! The more my opponents indulge their fury, with the more alacrity I advance. I leave the things that are behind me for them to bark at, and follow those that are before me that they may have them also to bark at in their turn."

Eck felt how very shameful his conduct had been, and made an effort to justify himself in a letter to Carlstadt, in which he calls Luther "their common friend." He threw the whole blame on the bishop of Eichstädt, at whose instance he professed to have written the work. He had had no intention of publishing his work; otherwise he would have paid more regard to the bonds of friendship between him and Luther. In fine, he begged that instead of waging a public controversy with him, Luther would rather turn his arms against the theologians of Frankfort. The Ingoldstädt professor, although he had not feared to strike the first blow, began to take alarm when he thought of the powers of the opponent whom he had been foolish enough to attack. He would willingly have shunned the conflict, but it was now too late.

All these fine words did not prevail with Luther; yet he felt disposed to remain silent: "I shall swallow patiently," says he, "this morsel so worthy of Cerberus."¹ But his friends thought otherwise; they solicited, they even constrained him. Accordingly, he replied to the *Obelisks* by his *Asterisks*, "confronting," said he, with a play on the words, "the rust and livid colour of the Ingoldstädt doctor's Obelisks, with the light and radiant whiteness of the stars of heaven." In this work he bore less hard on his opponent, than he did on those he had previously to struggle with; still his indignation revealed itself in his words.

He showed that in the chaos presented by the *Obelisks*, there was nothing to be found of the Holy Scriptures, nothing of the fathers of the Church, nothing of the ecclesiastical canons; that all was most scholastic, most opinionative, and mere dreams;²

¹ Volui tamen hanc offam Cerbero dignam absorbere patientia. (Ibid.)

² Omnia scholasticissima, opinionissima, meraque somnia. (Asterisci Opp. L. lat. i, 145.)

in a word, it consisted of the very things that Luther had attacked. The *Asterisks* are full of life and energy. The author is indignant at the errors contained in his friend's book, but he compassionates the man.¹ He professes anew the fundamental principle which he had laid down in his reply to Prierias. "The supreme pontiff is a man and may err; but God is truth and cannot be deceived."² Farther on, employing towards the scholastic doctor an *argumentum ad hominem*, he says to him: "It would certainly be a piece of great impudence were any one, in the philosophy of Aristotle, to put forward what could not be proved by the authority of that ancient writer—You grant this—Well then, by much stronger reason, is it the most impudent of all effronteries, to affirm in the Church, and among Christians, what Jesus Christ has not taught.³ Now, where find we in the Bible that the treasury of Christ's merits is in the hands of the pope?"

He farther adds: "As for the malicious reproach of Bohemian heresy, I bear that reproach patiently, for the love of Jesus Christ. I live in a celebrated university, in a city which is well esteemed, in a bishoprick of some consideration, in a powerful duchy, where all are orthodox, and where, doubtless, people would not tolerate so mischievous an heretic."

Luther did not publish his *ASTERISKS*; he merely communicated them to his friends. They were not given to the world till afterwards.⁴

This breach betwixt the doctors of Ingoldstädt and Wittemberg, created a sensation throughout Germany. They had common friends, and among these Scheurl, in particular, through whom probably the two doctors had become friendly, became alarmed. He was of those who wished to see reform diffused throughout the entire extent of the German church, by means of its most distinguished organs. But if, from the very commencement, the most eminent theologians of the day were to quarrel; if, while Luther advanced as the bearer of things new,

¹ Indignor rei et misereor hominis. (Ibid. p. 150.)

² Homo est summus pontifex, falli potest. Sed veritas est Deus, qui falli non potest. (Ibid. p. 155.)

³ Longè ergo impudentissima omnium temeritas est, aliquid in ecclesiâ asserere et inter Christianos, quod non docuit Christus. (Ibid. p. 156.)

⁴ Cum privatim dederim Asteriscos meos non fit ei respondendi necessitas. (L. Epp. 126.)

Eck was to constitute himself the representative of things old, what schisms might there not be apprehended? Would not each of the two chiefs draw numerous adherents around him, and two hostile camps thus be formed in the midst of the empire?

Scheurl, accordingly, strenuously endeavoured to effect a reconciliation. Luther declared that he was ready to forget all,—that he loved the genius, and admired the learning of Dr. Eck,¹ and that what his former friend had done, had made him rather sorrowful than angry. “I am prepared,” said he to Scheurl, “for either peace or war; but I would rather that it should be peace. Set yourself then to work; share with us in our distress at the devil having sown these seeds of discord amongst us, and then rejoice that Christ, in his mercy, has destroyed them.” He at the same time wrote to Eck in terms of the greatest affection;² but Eck made no reply to Luther’s letter; he did not even so much as send him a message.³ It was now too late for a reconciliation. The conflict went on increasing, until Eck’s proud and implacable spirit snapt ere long the last remaining threads of this gradually relaxing friendship.

X. Such were the struggles which the champion of the Word of God had to sustain from his first entering on his career. But these combats with the distinguished personages of society, these academical disputes, are of small account in the eyes of a Christian. The doctors of this world fancy themselves to have gained the noblest triumphs should they succeed in filling a few newspapers and drawing-rooms with the noise of their systems. It being with them a matter of mere selfish or party interest, more than of the welfare of humanity, these worldly successes are all that they want; and thus their labours are but smoke which first blinds them, and then vanishes away. They have neglected to enkindle the mass of men, and have merely touched the surface of the human race.

It is much otherwise with the Christian; what interests him

¹ Diligimus hominis ingenium et admiramur eruditionem. (L. Epp. ad Scheurlum, 15th June, 1518, i. p. 125.)

² Quod ad me attinet, scripsi ad eum ipsum has, ut vides, amicissimas et plenas litteras humanitate erga eum. (Ibid.)

³ Neque enim litterarum, neque verborum me participem fecit. (Ibid.)

is not any mere social or academical success, but the salvation of souls. Willingly, therefore, does he neglect the brilliant skirmish in which he might engage at his ease with this world's champions, and devotes himself to the obscure labours by which light and life are conveyed to rural cottages and the lowly retreats of the people. These things did Luther, or rather, according to his Master's injunction, *these things he did and left not the others undone*. Even while combating inquisitors, chancellors of universities, and masters of the sacred palace, he endeavoured to diffuse sound religious views throughout the multitude. This was his aim in various popular productions which he published at this time, such as his *Discourses on the Ten Commandments*, delivered in Wittenberg church two years before, and of which we have already made mention, and his *Exposition of the Lord's Prayer for simple and unlearned laymen*.¹ Who can but wish to know how the Reformer at that time addressed himself to the people? We shall therefore quote some of the words which he sent forth "to run over the country," as he says in the preface to the second of these productions.

Prayer, being an act which flows peculiarly from the heart, will unquestionably ever be one of those points from which a true and vital reformation must commence; and it was one, accordingly, to which Luther gave his earliest attention. It is impossible to translate his energetic style, or the force of that language which may be said to have been created by his pen as he wrote; yet we will make the attempt.

"When thou prayest," says he, "let thy words be few, thy thoughts and feelings many, and, above all, let them be deep. The less thou speakest the better thou doest pray. Few words and many thoughts bespeak the Christian. Many words and few thoughts, bespeak the pagan. . . ."

"Merely apparent and corporeal prayer is that murmuring of the lips, that outward babbling, performed without attention, and which strikes the eyes and the ears of men; but prayer in spirit and in truth, is the inward longing, the motion and the sighs, which proceed from the depths of the heart. The former is the prayer of hypocrites, and of all who trust in themselves. The

¹ L. Opp. Leips. vii. 1086.

latter is the prayer of the children of God, who walk in his fear." . . .

Coming then to the first words of the Lord's prayer, *Our Father*, he thus expresses himself: "Among all titles there is none that disposes us better with regard to God than the title of father. Less satisfaction and comfort would it give us to call him Lord, or God, or Judge. . . . By this title of Father, the Lord's bowels are moved towards us; for no voice is so likely to move love and affection, as that of a child addressing its father.

"*Which art in heaven.* He that acknowledges that he has a Father who is in heaven, owns that he is like an orphan on the earth. Hence his heart feels an ardent longing, like that of a child living away from his father's country, among strangers, wretched and forlorn. It is as if he said: "Alas! my Father! Thou art in heaven, and I, thy miserable child, am on the earth, far from thee, amid every kind of danger, necessity, and sorrow.

"*Hallowed be thy name.* He who is angry or envious, who curses, or who slanders another, dishonours the name of that God in whose name he was baptized. Putting to impious uses the vessel which God has consecrated to himself, he is like a priest who would use the sacramental cup in giving drink to a sow, or in collecting manure. . . .

"*Thy kingdom come.* They who amass wealth, who build magnificent houses, who seek after all that this world can give, yet pronounce this prayer with their lips, are but like those huge organ pipes which make a prodigious noise in the churches but have no words, feeling, or reason." . . .

Farther on, Luther attacks the error of attributing virtue to pilgrimages, at that time so prevalent: "One goes to Rome, the other to St. James's, this man builds a chapel, that founds an endowment, and all that they may find their way to the kingdom of God; but all neglect the essential point, which is for themselves to become his kingdom. Why goest thou beyond seas in search of the kingdom of God? . . . It is within thy heart that it ought to be established.

"It is a terrible thing," he goes on to say, "to hear us uttering that petition: *Thy will be done!* Where in all the Church do we see that will of God done? . . . Bishop rises against

bishop, one church against another church. Priests, monks, nuns, quarrel, fight and wage war; there is nought but discord to be found everywhere. And yet each of the parties exclaims that he means well and has honest intentions; and thus for the honour and glory of God, they, one and all, do the work of the devil. . . .

“Why say we, *our bread?*” he continues, explaining the words, *Give us this day our daily bread.* “Because we pray, not that we may have the common bread that the heathen eat and that God bestows on all men, but for *our bread*, given to us as children of the heavenly Father.

“And what then is this bread of God?—It is Jesus Christ our Lord. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven, and which gives life unto the world.* And therefore, let no one be deceived, all the sermons and all the instructions which do not represent to us Jesus Christ, and do not lead us to the knowledge of him, cannot be our daily bread and the nourishment of our souls. . . .

“To what purpose has such bread been prepared, if it be not set before us, and so we cannot taste it. . . . It is as if a man had prepared a magnificent feast, without there being any one to distribute the bread, bring in the dishes, and pour out drink, so that the guests are left to nourish themselves on what they can see or smell. . . . Therefore it is that we ought to preach Jesus Christ alone.

“But, sayest thou, what then is meant by knowing Jesus Christ and what advantage comes of it? . . . Reply: To know Jesus Christ, is to comprehend what the apostle says, *Christ has of God been made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Now, thou understandest this, if thou doest own that all thy wisdom is a condemnable folly, thy righteousness condemnable iniquity, thy sanctification condemnable defilement, thy redemption a miserable condemnation; if thou doest feel that verily in the sight of God and of all creatures, thou art a fool, a sinner, an impure person, a condemned man, and if thou doest show, not only by words but also from the bottom of thine heart, and by thy works, that there remaineth no solace for thee, and no salvation, unless in Jesus Christ. To believe is nothing but to eat this bread from heaven.”

Thus did Luther faithfully adhere to his resolution of opening the eyes of a people, so blinded as to be led by the priests at their will; and as his writings were speedily disseminated throughout Germany, they threw a new light into men's minds and abundantly scattered the seeds of truth over a soil well prepared to receive them. But in turning his regards to those at a distance, he did not forget such as were near.

From all their pulpits the Dominicans consigned the infamous heretic to condemnation. Luther, the people's favourite, and who, had he wished it, might with a few words addressed to their passions, have excited them into a tempest, ever disdained such triumphs, and thought only of instructing them.

His continually advancing reputation and the courage with which he lifted up the banner of Christ in the midst of an enslaved church, made people flock to hear him preach with a constantly increasing interest. Never was he attended by greater crowds. Luther was a man who went directly to his point. One day being in the pulpit at Wittemberg, he undertook to establish the doctrine of repentance, and on that occasion pronounced a discourse which became very famous, and in which he stated many of the fundamental points of evangelical doctrine.

First, he contrasts the pardon of men with the pardon of heaven: "There are two remissions," says he, "the remission of the penalty, and the remission of the guilt. The former reconciles man outwardly with the Christian Church. The latter, which is the celestial indulgence, reconciles man with God. If man finds not in himself that calm of the conscience—that joy of heart—which flow from the remission granted by God, no other indulgence can avail him, were he to buy up all that were ever to be had in the world."

He then continues thus: "They would do good works before their sins are forgiven, whereas sins must be forgiven, before good works can be done. It is not good works that expel sin; but expel thou sin, and thou shalt have the works!¹ For good works ought to be done with a joyful heart and a good conscience towards God, that is to say, with our sins remitted."

He then comes to the main object of his sermon, which was

¹ Nicht die Werke treiben die Sünde aus; sondern die Austreibung der Sünde thut gute Werke. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 162.)

that, also, of the Reformation. The Church had put herself in the room of God and of his Word; against this he protests, and makes all to depend on faith in the Word of God.

“The remission of sin,” says he, “is not in the power of the pope, or of the bishop, or of the priest, or of any man whomsoever, but depends solely on the Word of Christ and on thine own faith. For Christ is not willing that we should found our consolation, or our salvation, on the word or work of man, but solely on himself, his own work and his own Word.

. . . Thy repentance and thy works may deceive thee; but Christ, thy God, will not deceive thee. He stumbles not, and the devil shall never reverse his words.¹

“A pope, a bishop, have no more power than the pettiest priest, when the remission of a sin is in question. And should there even be no priest, any Christian, be it a woman, or a child,² may do the same thing. For should a simple Christian say to thee; “God forgives sin in the name of Jesus Christ;” and if thou doest believe that saying with a firm faith, and as if God himself addressed it to thee, thou art absolved. . . .

“If thou believest not that thy sins are forgiven thee, thou makest God a liar, and thou doest declare that thou art more sure of thy vain thoughts than of God and his Word. . . .

“Under the Old Testament, neither priest, nor king, nor prophet, was empowered to announce the forgiveness of sins. But under the New, this is in the power of every believer. Thus thou seest that the whole Church is full of the forgiveness of sins!³ Should a godly Christian relieve thy conscience by the Word of the cross, be it man or woman, old or young, receive that consolation with such a faith that you would rather die repeated deaths than doubt that it should be thus before God. . . . Repent, do all the good works that thou canst; but let the faith thou hast in the forgiveness of Jesus Christ, hold the first place and remain as chief upon the field.”⁴

Thus spoke Luther to his astonished and delighted hearers. All that scaffolding which impudent priests, for their own ends,

¹ Christus dein Gott wird dir nicht lügen, noch wanken. (L. Epp. (L.) vii. p. 162.)

² Ob es schon ein Weib oder ein Kind wäre. (Ibid.)

³ Also siehst du dass die ganze Kirche voll von Vergebung der Sünden ist. (Ibid.)

⁴ Und hauptman im Felde bleibe. (Ibid.)

had erected between God and the soul of man, was thrown down, and man was brought into immediate communication with his God. The word of pardon came down pure from above, without passing through a thousand corrupting channels. There was no farther need for men putting their deceptive seal on the testimony of God, in order to make that testimony available; the monopoly of the priestly caste was abolished, and the Church set free.

XI. Meanwhile Luther felt that the fire which had been lighted at Wittemberg, must be carried elsewhere, and, not content with proclaiming the Gospel at the place of his residence, whether among the youths of the academy or among the people, wished to disseminate sound doctrine in other places. In the spring of 1518, the Augustinian order was to hold its grand chapter at Heidelberg, and Luther, as one of the distinguished members of that order, was invited to attend. His friends used their utmost efforts to dissuade him from going; for, in fact, the monks had done their utmost to make his very name detested in all the places through which he would have to pass. Adding threats to insults, they might easily have raised a popular tumult, to whose violence he might have fallen a victim on his way. "Or, failing that," said his friends, "what they dare not do by open violence, they will do by ambuscade and fraud."¹ But Luther never would suffer himself to be stopt in the discharge of a duty by dread of danger, however imminent. Shutting his ears, accordingly, to the timid discourses of his friends, he pointed to Him in whom he trusted, and under whose safeguard he desired to undertake this so much dreaded journey. At the close of the Easter holidays he quietly set out on foot,² on the 13th of April, 1518.

He took with him a guide, called Urban, who was to carry his little bundle and to convoy him as far as Wurzburg. What a crowd of thoughts must have rushed upon the heart of the servant of the Lord during this journey! At Weissenfels, the pastor of the place, although unknown to him, recognised him instantly as the Wittemberg doctor, and welcomed him as such.³ At Erfurt, he was joined by two other brothers of the

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 98.

² *Pedester veniam.* (Ibid.)

³ Ibid. p. 105.

Augustinian order. At Judenbach, all three met the elector's intimate adviser, Degenhard Pfeffinger, who did for them the honours of the inn in which they found him. "I have had the satisfaction," writes Luther to Spalatin, "to make a small inroad on the purse of this rich nobleman; you know how I like on all occasions that offer, to make a breach upon the rich to the advantage of the poor, particularly when the former are my friends."¹ He reached Cobourg overwhelmed with fatigue. "All goes well by the grace of God," he writes, "if it be not that I must admit having sinned in undertaking this journey on foot. But for this sin, I apprehend I have no need of the remission granted by the indulgences; for the contrition is perfect, and the satisfaction ample. I am quite spent with fatigue, and all the means of conveyance are occupied. Is not this enough, and more than enough, of penance, contrition, and satisfaction?"²

Finding neither room in the public conveyances, nor any one willing to resign his place to him, the Reformer of Germany, notwithstanding his fatigue, was obliged to set off next morning from Cobourg as a modest traveller on foot. He arrived at Wurzburg on the second Sunday after Easter, as the day was declining, and there he dismissed his guide.

It was in this city that the bishop of Bibra, who had welcomed his theses with so warm an approval, was to be found, and Luther had been commissioned to deliver a letter to him from the elector of Saxony. Glad to have an opportunity of personal acquaintance with this bold champion of the truth, the bishop lost no time in inviting him to the episcopal palace; nay, even went out to meet him, spoke to him with much affection, and offered to supply him with a guide to Heidelberg. But at Wurzburg Luther had met his two friends, the vicar-general Staupitz, and Lange, the prior of Erfurt, and they had offered him a place in their carriage. Accordingly, he thanked the bishop for his offer, and the three friends set off next day from Wurzburg. After three days' travelling and conversation together, they reached Heidelberg on the 21st of April, and there Luther went to lodge at the monastery of the Augustinians.

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 104.

² Ibid. p. 106.

The elector of Saxony had given him a letter for count palatine Wolfgang, duke of Bavaria, and this led Luther to that superb castle, which to the present day is the admiration of strangers. Though a monk from the plains of Saxony, he had an eye which could admire the noble site of Heidelberg, placed at the angle formed by the meeting of the two noble valleys of the Neckar and the Rhine. Presenting the letter he had brought to James Simlar, the court intendant, the latter, after glancing it over, told him that truly he had come with precious credentials.¹ The count palatine gave Luther a hearty reception, and often invited him, as well as Lange and Staupitz, to his table. So friendly a welcome could not fail greatly to solace Luther, whose feelings on this occasion we may learn from one of his letters: "We mutually gladdened and amused each other," says he, "with pleasant and quiet talk, eating and drinking, going over all the magnificent decorations of the palatine palace, admiring the ornaments, the armories, the coats of mail, in short, everything worth note in that illustrious and truly royal castle."²

Meanwhile Luther had something else in hand, and felt that he must work while it was day. Having come into an university which exercised a great influence over western and southern Germany, he had to strike a blow which would shake the churches of those countries; and he applied himself, accordingly, to the drawing up of certain theses which he proposed to defend at a public disputation. Such discussions were the fashion of the day; but this was to be one whose usefulness Luther saw must depend on its warmly engrossing men's minds. His own character, moreover, led him to present the truth in a paradoxical point of view. The university professors were unwilling to grant the use of their grand audience-hall for the disputation, which, accordingly, had to take place in a hall attached to the Augustinian monastery, and the day fixed for it was the 26th of April.

Heidelberg received the Gospel at a later date; but any one present at the conference in the monastery, might even then foresee the fruits which it was ultimately to produce.

¹ Ihr habt bei Gott einen köstlichen Creden. (L. Epp. i. 111.) ² Ibid.

Luther's reputation attracted a large concourse of auditors, and among these were professors, courtiers, burgesses, and students. The following are some of the doctor's *Paradoxes*; for such is the name he gave to these theses; and although some persons might give them the same name at this day, it were easy, nevertheless, to translate them into plain propositions:

1. "God's law is a saving doctrine of life. Nevertheless, it cannot help man in seeking after righteousness; on the contrary, it thwarts him in that search.

3. "Man's works, fair and good as they may be, are no more however, according to all appearance, than mortal sins.

4 "God's works, however unsightly or evil they may appear, have nevertheless an immortal merit.

7 "The works of the righteous themselves would be mortal sins, unless, filled with a holy reverence for the Lord, they feared lest their works should prove to be mortal sins.¹

9 "To say that works done without Christ are dead, indeed, but not mortal, shows a dangerous forgetfulness of the fear of God.

13. "Free will, since man's fall, is but a mere word; and if man do what it is possible for him to do, he sins mortally.

16. "A man who imagines that he can attain to grace by doing all that is possible for him to do, adds one sin to another, and is twice guilty.

18. "It is certain that man ought wholly to despair of himself, in order to his becoming capable of receiving the grace of Christ.

21. "A theologian by title calls good evil, and evil good; but a theologian of the cross treats the matter properly.

22. "That wisdom which pretends to the knowledge of the invisible perfections of God, in his works, inflates a man, blinds and hardens him.²

¹ Justorum opera essent mortalia nisi pio Dei timore, ab ipsismet justis, ut mortalia timerentur. (L. Opp. lat. i. 55.)

² What Luther means here is not the effects naturally resulting from this wisdom, but only the perverted use men make of it, and the effects which in that case alone it produces, accidentally not essentially, in consequence of the perverseness of the human heart, on minds not enlightened by faith in Christ. Hence he by no means intends to depreciate wisdom, provided it be rightly used and in its own place, as little as he would disparage the law of God, as clearly appears from the 24th proposition. Be it remembered in

23. "The law moves God's wrath, slays, curses, accuses, judges, and condemns all that is not in Christ."¹

24. "Yet that wisdom (§ 22.) is not bad, and the law (§ 23.) is not to be rejected, but the man who does not study the knowledge of God under the cross, changes all that is good into evil.

25. "It is not the man who does many works that is justified, but the man who, without works, has much faith in Jesus Christ.

26. "The law saith: 'Do this!' and what it commands is never done. Grace saith: 'Believe in this person!' and already all things are done."²

28. "The love of God does not find, but creates in man what it loves; the love of man springs from what he contemplates with love."³

These theses were attacked by five doctors in theology, after having read them with the astonishment naturally excited by their novelty. Such theology to them seemed very strange, and yet Luther himself acknowledges that they discussed its merits with an affability which led him to regard them with much esteem, and, at the same time, with vigour and discernment. Luther, on his side, displayed an admirable mildness in reply, incomparable patience in listening to the objections of his opponents, and all the vivacity of St. Paul in resolving the difficulties presented to him. His answers, which were short but replete with Scripture, filled with admiration all who heard him. "He is on the whole like Erasmus," said several; "but in one respect is his superior: he openly speaks out what Erasmus is content to insinuate."⁴

The disputation was drawing to a close, and of Luther's opponents all had honourably withdrawn from the scene, except the

general that Luther's object here, as in other places, is to express himself paradoxically, and in a manner that startles by its strangeness, in order the better to awaken attention and attract it to the positions he seeks to establish.
—L. R.

¹ Lex iram Dei operatur, occidit, maledicit, reum^o facit, judicat, damnat quicquid non est in Christo. (L. Opp. lat. i. 55.)

² Lex dicit: Fac hoc! et nunquam fit. Gratia dicit: Crede in hunc! et jam facta sunt omnia. (Ibid.)

³ Amor Dei non invenit, sed creat suum diligibile; amor hominis fit a suo diligibili. (Ibid.)

⁴ Bucer, in Scultet. Annal. evangel. renovat. p. 22.

youngest among them, Dr. George Niger, who now maintained a single contest with his powerful antagonist. Frightened at last by the bold propositions of the Augustinian friar, and at a loss what arguments to employ, he exclaimed in a tone that betrayed his fear: "Were our peasants to hear such things, they would stone you to death!"¹—words which called forth no little hilarity from the meeting.

Yet never had an auditory listened with deeper attention to a theological dispute. The Reformer's first words had roused the minds of all present, so that questions which a short time before would have been met with indifference, now seemed replete with interest, and on the countenances of many might be read the new ideas suggested to their minds by the bold assertions of the Saxon doctor.

Three youths were particularly affected on this occasion. One, called Martin Bucer, was a Dominican, twenty-seven years old, who, notwithstanding the prejudices of his order, seemed resolved not to lose a word that fell from the doctor's lips. Bucer was born in a small town of Alsace, entered a monastery at the age of sixteen, and there gave token of talents which led the most enlightened of the monks to be sanguine in their hopes with regard to him.² "He will one day," they said, "be the ornament of our order." His superiors having sent him to Heidelberg that he might devote himself to the study of philosophy, theology, Greek, and Hebrew, there he met with several of the works that Erasmus was then publishing, and read them with avidity.

Luther's first writings soon appeared, on which the young Alsatian student lost no time in comparing the doctrines of the Reformer with the Holy Scriptures, and then it was that there arose in his mind doubts as to some parts of the pope's religion.³ Thus used the light to be diffused in those days. The elector palatine took notice of the young friar, whose powerful and sonorous voice, engaging manners, eloquence, and frankness in

¹ Si rustici hæc audirent, certè lapidibus vos obruerent et interficerent. (L. Epp. i. p. 111.)

² Prudentioribus monachis spem de se præclaram excitavit. (Melch. Adam. Vit. Bucer, p. 211.)

³ Cum doctrinam in eis traditam cum sacris litteris contuisset, quædam in pontificiâ religione suspecta habere cœpit. (Ibid.)

attacking the then prevailing vices, made him a distinguished preacher. He was appointed chaplain to the court, and it was during his discharge of that office, that he heard of Luther's journey to Heidelberg. What delightful tidings for Bucer! No one repaired more eagerly to the Augustinian monastery, and he went provided with papers, pen, and ink, that he might take down in writing all that the doctor was to say. But while his own hand was engaged in rapidly tracing Luther's words, the hand of God was writing, in more durable characters, the great truths to which he was listening, on the tablets of his heart. It was in the course of that ever-memorable hour that the dawn of the doctrine of grace began to diffuse itself over Bucer's soul,¹ and the Dominican was gained to Christ.

Not far from Bucer was John Brenz, or Brentius, then at the age of nineteen. The son of a magistrate in a town of Swabia, he had been entered as student at Heidelberg at thirteen. Brenz was unrivalled in his powers of application. No sooner had midnight sounded than he rose and applied himself to work; and this became so much a matter of habit with him, that during all his life after, he could not sleep beyond that hour. He afterwards devoted the silent moments he thus obtained, to meditation on the Scriptures. Brenz was one of the first in Germany to perceive the light which was then appearing there, and welcomed it with a soul susceptible of the warmest affections.² He had greedily devoured Luther's writings, but what was his joy on being able to listen to the doctor himself at Heidelberg! One of the latter's propositions particularly struck the youthful Brenz; it was this: "It is not he who performs many works who is justified before God, but he who, without works, believes much in Jesus Christ."

A godly woman at Heilbronn on the Neckar, the wife of a senator of that city, called Snepf, had, like another Anna, consecrated her first-born son, with a strong desire that she might live to see him devote himself to theology. This youth, born in 1492, made rapid progress in literature; but whether from

¹ *Primam lucem purioris sententiæ de justificatione in suo pectore sensit. Melch. Adam. Vit. Bucer, p. 211.*

² *Ingens Dei beneficium lætus Brentius agnovit, et gratâ mente amplexus est. (Ibid.)*



JOHN DEERE

taste and ambition, or from a desire to comply with his father's wishes, he devoted himself to the study of jurisprudence.¹ The godly mother saw with grief her son, her Ehrhard, following a different course from that to which she had devoted him. She unceasingly warned, urged, and solemnly enjoined him to remember the vow she had made on the day of his birth. Overcome at length by his mother's perseverance, Ehrhard Snepf acquiesced, and soon experienced so keen a relish for his new studies that nothing in the world could divert him from them.

He was an intimate associate of Bucer and Brenz, and their friendship continued during life; "for," says one of their historians, "friendships that are based on the love of letters and of virtue, never die out." He was present along with his two friends at the disputation at Heidelberg, where the Wittemberg doctor's paradoxes, and the contest he so courageously maintained, gave a new spring to his energies. Rejecting the idle notion of human merits, he embraced the doctrine of the free justification of the sinner.

The day following Bucer paid Luther a visit. "He conversed," says he, "familiarly, and with none present but ourselves; the repast was most exquisite, not in regard to the viands, but from the truths that were proposed to me. Whatever were the objections I might state, the doctor had replies for all, and explained everything with the most perfect clearness. Oh, would to God that I had time to write to you more fully about it!"² . . . Luther himself was touched at the feelings displayed by Bucer: "He is the only friar of his order," he wrote to Spalatin, "that shows sincerity; he is a most hopeful young man. He received me with simplicity, and eagerly conversed with me. He deserves our confidence and our love."³

Urged by the new truths that began to dawn upon their minds, Brenz, Snepf, and others, came likewise to converse and confer with Luther, and to ask for farther explanations on points which they did not clearly comprehend. With the help of the Bible, the Reformer had an answer for all; every word he

¹ Crebris interpellationibus eum voti quod de nato ipso fecerat, admoneret; et a studio juris ad theologiam quasi conviciis avocaret. (Melch. Adami Snepfi Vita.)

² Gerdesius, Monumenta. antiq., etc.

³ L. Epp. i. p. 412.

uttered seemed to shed fresh light on their souls; it was as if a new world were opening before them.

But it was requisite that what the man of God had begun should be followed up by others, lest the torch which had just been lighted, should go out; and these generous men, accordingly, on Luther's leaving Heidelberg, began to teach in their turn. When teachers are silent, scholars will speak. Young as Brenz still was, he began to lecture on St. Matthew's gospel, first in his own room, and when that was found too small, in the philosophy lecture-room. Envious at the sight of so many crowding to hear this youth's prelections, the theologians began to lose their temper, whereupon Brenz took orders and transferred his labours to the college of the canons of the Holy Spirit. Thus did the flame which had been kindled in Saxony, extend to Heidelberg; the light began to multiply itself at different points, and, as has been said, it was now seed time in the palatinate.

But more than the Palatinate was benefitted by the disputation at Heidelberg, for these courageous friends of the truth, soon exerted a powerful influence beyond the sphere they then occupied. Advancing to the most eminent positions, they took part in many of the discussions to which the Reformation led; first Strasburg, and afterwards England, were indebted to Bucer's labours for a purer knowledge of the truth; Snepf taught it first at Marburg, then at Stuttgard, Tubingen, and Jena; Brenz after teaching it at Heidelberg, was long engaged in doing so at Halle, in Swabia, and at Tubingen; so that we shall often meet again with these three worthies.

The Heidelberg disputation was beneficial to Luther himself, now making daily progress in his knowledge of the truth. "I am one of those," says he, "who have advanced themselves while writing and instructing others; not one of those who all at once emerge from nothing, and become great and learned doctors."

Great was his delight at witnessing the avidity with which the youths attending the schools of learning, received the truth as it was anew presented to them; and this solaced him while deploring the obstinate attachment to their obsolete notions shown by the old doctors. "I entertain the magnificent hope,"

he would say, "that just as Christ, when rejected by the Jews, turned to the Gentiles, we shall now likewise see the true theology, though rejected by dotards who are devoted to vain fantastic opinions, welcomed by the new generation."¹

The chapter being closed, Luther proposed to return to Wittenberg, upon which the count palatine gave him a letter to convey to the elector, dated May 1st, in which he said, that Luther had shown so much skill in the disputation as could not fail greatly to redound to the glory of Wittenberg? They would by no means allow him to return on foot.² The Augustinians of Nuremberg conducted him as far as Wurzburg; and from that he proceeded to Erfurt, accompanied by the friars of that city. No sooner did he arrive there than he went to the house of his old master, Jodocus. That old professor had been much grieved and scandalised at the course which his former disciple had taken, and used to mark all Luther's sentences with the theta, employed by the Greeks to indicate condemnation.³ He had written to the young doctor in a tone of reprimand, and the latter wished to reply by word of mouth to the charges of his correspondent. But not being received, he wrote to Jodocus as follows: "The whole university, with the exception of a single licentiate, thinks as I do. Nay more: the prince, the bishop, several other prelates, and the entire body of our enlightened citizens, declare with one voice that until now they never knew, nor had heard of Jesus Christ and his gospel. I am ready to receive your corrections; and even when really very harsh, to me they will seem very mild. Fear not then to give full vent to your feelings; discharge your wrath. I neither wish to be nor find myself capable of being angry with you. God and my conscience are witnesses that it is so!"⁴

The old doctor was affected at the sentiments of his former pupil; and wished to see whether no way might be found for removing the condemnatory theta. They entered upon an explanation, but it came to no result. "I have at least made him understand," said Luther, "that all their sentences were

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 112.

² Veni autem curru qui ieram pedester. (L. Epp. i. p. 110.)

³ Omnibus placitis meis nigrum theta præfigit. (Ib. p. 111.)

⁴ L. Epp. i. ibid.

like the beast which, report says, eats itself. But it is vain to speak to a deaf man. These doctors are doggedly attached to their minute distinctions, even although they admit that for maintaining them they have only the light of natural reason, as they say, and that is a dark chaos to us who proclaim no light but Jesus Christ, who is the only true light."¹

Luther left Erfurt in the carriage belonging to the monastery which conducted him to Eisleben, and from thence the Augustinian friars of the place, feeling proud of a doctor who reflected so much lustre on their order and city, being that also where he was born, sent him on to Wittenberg by their own horses, and at their expense. Every one wished to show marks of affection and esteem for this extraordinary person, who was now becoming greater and greater every step he took.²

He arrived on the Saturday following Ascension day. The journey had improved his health, and his friends found him stronger and looking better than when he left them. They joyfully listened to all that he had to tell them. Luther now reposed for some time after the fatigues he had undergone by the way, and at the Heidelberg disputation; but this interval of ease was only the preparation for still severer labours.

¹ *Nisi dictamine rationis naturalis, quod apud nos idem est, quod chaos tenebratum, qui non prædicamus aliam lucem, quam Christum Jesum lucem veram et solam.* (L. Epp. i. p. 111.)

² *Ita ut nonnullis videar factus habitior et corpulentior.* (Ibid.)

BOOK FOURTH.

LUTHER BEFORE THE LEGATE.

MAY—DECEMBER, 1518.

I. THE truth at last had raised its head in the midst of Christendom, and having overcome the inferior organs of the popedom, was about to engage in a mortal struggle with its chief. We have now to contemplate Luther as the direct antagonist of Rome.

It was after his return from Heidelberg that he sprang into this new arena. His first theses on the indulgences having been misunderstood, he resolved to state their true meaning with greater clearness; and as the fierce outcry he had called forth from the blind resentment of his enemies, had taught him the importance of gaining over the most enlightened part of the nation in favour of the truth, he resolved to appeal in this matter to their judgment, by laying before them the grounds of his new convictions. He could not fail, for once at least, to provoke the judicial interference of Rome; nor did he hesitate to transmit his explanations thither. With one hand he presented them to the impartial and enlightened among his own countrymen, while, with the other, he laid them before the throne of the sovereign pontiff.

These explanations of his theses, to which he gave the title of *Resolutions*,¹ were written with much moderation; their author endeavouring to soften down the passages which had caused most irritation, and giving proofs of true modesty. At the same time, however, he showed that he was not to be shaken in his convictions, and he courageously defended all the propositions

¹ L. Opp. Leips. xvii. p. 29. to p. 113.

which regard for the truth compelled him to maintain. Anew he repeated that every Christian who truly repents, does not need the indulgence in order to his sins being forgiven; that the pope, equally with the least among the priests, can but simply declare that God has already pardoned; that the treasury of the merits of saints was a mere chimera, and that Holy Scripture was the sole rule of faith. But on some of these points let us listen to himself.

He sets out by fixing the nature of true repentance, and opposes that act of God whereby he renews man, to the mummeries of the Roman Church. "The Greek word μετανοεῖτε," says he, "means: put on a new spirit, new feelings, have a new nature, so that no longer being earthly, you shall become heavenly men. . . . Christ is a teacher of the spirit and not of the letter; his words are spirit and they are life. He therefore teaches a repentance according to the spirit and the truth, not those outward penances of which the proudest sinners may without any self-abasement acquit themselves; the repentance he would have, is such as is compatible with every condition of life, whether it be under the purple of royalty, or the robes of the priesthood, or the hat that distinguishes the prince—and amid the pomps of Babylon where a Daniel was to be found, as well as under the monk's frock and the beggar's rags."¹

Farther on, we find these bold expressions: "I do not trouble myself about what may please or displease the pope. He is but a man as others are. There have been many popes who have liked, not errors and vices only, but things more extraordinary still. I listen to the pope as pope, that is to say, when he speaks in the canons, according to the canons, or when he determines some point with the concurrence of a council, but not when he speaks his own mere notions. Were I to do otherwise, might I not say with those who know not Jesus Christ, that those horrible massacres of Christians wherewith Julius II. is stained, were the kind deeds of a godly pastor towards the sheep of the Lord?"²

"I cannot but be astonished," he goes on to say, "at the simplicity of those who have said that the two swords of the gospel represented, the one the spiritual, the other the temporal power.

¹ On the first thesis.

² Thesis 26.

True, the pope wields an iron sword, and presents himself to Christendom, not as a tender father but as a dreadful tyrant. Ah! God in his anger has given us the sword we longed to have, and has deprived us of the one that we disdained. No part of the world has witnessed more terrible wars than those waged among Christians. . . . How is it that the subtile spirit which discovered this fine commentary, has not interpreted, in the same subtile manner, the history of the two keys delivered to St. Peter, and established it as one of the Church's dogmas that the one serves for opening the treasures of heaven, and the other those of the world?"¹

"It is impossible," he further says, "that a man can be a Christian without having Christ; and if he have Christ, he has at the same time all that is Christ's. What gives peace to our conscience is, that through faith our sins are no longer ours, but Christ's, on whom God has laid them all; and that, on the other hand, all Christ's righteousness is ours, God having bestowed it on us. Christ lays his hand on us and we are healed. He casts his mantle over us and we are covered; for he is the glorious Saviour, blessed evermore."²

With such views of the richness of the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ, there could no longer be any need for indulgences.

Even while he attacks the popedom, Luther speaks honourably of Leo X. "The times we live in," says he, "are so bad that even the greatest personages find they cannot come to the help of the Church. We have a very good pope at present in Leo X. We are gladdened by his sincerity and his learning. But amiable and agreeable as he may be, what can the man do alone? Assuredly he deserved being pope in better times. In our days we deserve only such men as were Julius II. and Alexander VI."

He then proceeds to the main fact: "I desire to speak out briefly and boldly: the Church needs to be Reformed. And this cannot be the work of a single man, like the pope, or of many men, like the cardinals and the fathers of councils; but it must be the work of the whole world, or, rather, it is a work which it belongs to God alone to accomplish. As for the time for such a reformation to commence, he alone who has created time can

¹ Thesis 80.

² Thesis 37.

know. . . . The dyke is broken, and to restrain the flood, now fiercely pouring in, is no longer in our power.”

Such are some of the statements and sentiments addressed by Luther to his more enlightened countrymen. The feast of Whitsunday was now drawing near, and it was at the season when the apostles first bore witness to their faith in the risen Jesus, that Luther, like another apostle, published that volume, so full of life, in which he breathes forth the desires of his whole heart for the resurrection of the Church. On Saturday, May 22d, 1518, being Whitsunday eve, he sent his work to the bishop of Brandenburg, his ordinary, together with a letter to the following effect:

“Most worthy father in God! some time ago a new and hitherto unheard of doctrine, touching apostolic indulgences, began to resound in these lands. Both the learned and the simple were put into commotion by it, and several, some personally known to me, while others I had never seen, besought me to declare by word of mouth or by writing, what I thought of the novelty, not to say the impudence of such a doctrine. I first held my peace and declined the task. But at length things came to such a point, that the sanctity of the pope was compromised.

“What was I to do? I thought it my duty neither to approve nor disapprove, but to start a controversy on this important point, until holy Church should pronounce upon it.

“No one appearing at the debate to which I had invited all men, and my theses being considered not as points left open for discussion, but as asserted propositions,¹ I found myself compelled to publish an explanation of them. Deign then to receive these trifles² which I now offer to you, most clement bishop. And that the whole world may perceive that I do not act audaciously, I supplicate your Reverence to take pen and ink, and blot out, or even throw into the fire and burn whatever displeases you in what I send. I am aware that Jesus Christ needs not my labours or services, and can well, without me, preach good tidings to his Church. Not that the bulls and the threats of my enemies frighten me; quite the contrary. But

¹ *Non ut disputabilia sed asserta acciperentur.* (L. Epp. i. 114.)

² *Ineptias.*

for their effrontery and shamelessness, never should my name be mentioned. I should shut myself up in a corner and study for myself alone. If this be not God's affair, it is certainly not mine, or any man's, but a mere thing of nought. Let the honour and glory be his alone to whom they appertain!"

Luther was still imbued with respect for the head of the Church; he gave Leo credit for being a just man and a sincere lover of the truth, and to him therefore he wished to address himself. Eight days thereafter, on Trinity Sunday, 30th May, 1518, he wrote the letter from which the following fragments are taken.

"To the most blessed father Leo X., sovereign bishop, friar Martin Luther, Augustinian, wishes eternal salvation!

"I understand, Most holy Father, that ill reports circulate with regard to me, and that my name has been brought into bad odour with your holiness. I am called heretic, apostate, treacherous, and a thousand other hard names. I am amazed at what I see, and alarmed at what I hear. Yet the sole foundation of my peace remains intact, and that is an undefiled and quiet conscience. Be pleased to attend to me, O most holy Father, even to me who am but a child and an ignoramus."

Luther then relates how the affair began and proceeds:

"In all the alehouses there was nothing to be heard but complaints about the avarice of the priests, and attacks on the power of the keys and of the sovereign pontiff. All Germany can witness to this. On hearing of it, my zeal was moved for the glory of Christ, as it appears to me, or, if we must in some other way account for it, my young boiling blood took fire.

"I gave warning to several of the princes of the Church. But some mocked at me, and others closed their ears. All seemed overawed by the terror of your name. I then published the disputation.

"You now see, most holy Father, the act of incendiarism which, it is said, has set the whole world in a blaze.

"What course ought I now to pursue? I cannot retract, and I perceive that this publication draws on me inconceivable hatred from all quarters.¹ I have no wish to make a figure of myself

¹ Sed cogit necessitas me anserem strepere inter olores, he adds. (L. Epp. i. p. 121.)

before the world, for I am without learning, without talent, and far too inconsiderable a person to attempt great matters; especially in this illustrious age, when Cicero himself, were he alive, would be compelled to hide himself in some obscure corner.

“But in order to appease my opponents, and to reply to the solicitations which many have addressed to me, you see I have published my views. I have published them, holy Father, that thereby I may be the safer under the shadow of your wings. All who wish to do so, may thus understand with what simplicity of heart I besought the ecclesiastical authority to instruct me, and with what respect I have acknowledged the power of the keys.¹ Had I not conducted my affair in a proper manner, it would have been impossible for the most serene Lord Frederick, duke and elector of Saxony, that conspicuous friend of the apostolic and Christian truth, to have suffered a person so dangerous as people would have me to be, to remain in his university of Wittemberg.

“Therefore it is, most holy Father, that I fall at the feet of your holiness, and submit to you all that I have and am. Ruin my cause or embrace it; do me justice or injustice; take my life or restore it to me, as you please. I shall own your voice as the voice of Jesus Christ, who presides and speaks by you. If I have deserved death I refuse not to die;² the earth belongs to the Lord with all that it contains. May he be praised unto all eternity! May he preserve you for evermore! Amen.

“Given on the day of the Holy Trinity, the year 1518.

FRIAR MARTIN LUTHER, AUGUSTINIAN.”

What humility and what truth in this fearfulness on Luther's part, or rather in the avowal he makes, that his boiling young blood may possibly have caught fire too soon! We see here the man of sincerity who, not presuming on himself, dreads the influence of his passions, even in those actions of his which are most conformed to the Word of God. There is a wide differ-

¹ Quam pure simpliciterque ecclesiasticam potestatem et reverentiam clavium quæsierim et coluerim. (L. Epp. i. p. 121.)

² Quarè beatissime Pater, prostratum me pedibus tuæ Beatitudinis offero, cum omnibus quæ sum et habeo: vivifica, occide; voca, revoca; approba, reproba, ut placuerit. Vocem tuam, vocem Christi in te præsentis et loquentis agnoscam. Si mortem merui, mori non recusabo. (Ibid.)

ence between such language and that of a proud fanatic. We see working in Luther's mind the desire to gain over Leo to the cause of the truth, to prevent all schism, and to make the reformation, of which he proclaims the necessity, proceed from the highest dignitary of the Church. Certainly it is not he whom we must charge with the destruction in the West of that unity, the loss of which was deplored by so many men of all parties afterwards. He sacrificed everything for the sake of preserving it: everything but the truth. It was his opponents and not he, who by refusing to acknowledge the fulness and the sufficiency of the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ, rent asunder our Lord's coat at the foot of the cross.

After writing this letter, Luther the same day addressed one to his friend Staupitz, the vicar-general of his order. It was through his intervention that he desired to transmit his Resolutions and accompanying epistle to Leo.

"I pray you," says he, "kindly to accept the wretched pieces¹ which I send you, and to see to their being transmitted to the excellent pope Leo X. Not that I would thereby drag you into the same peril in which I am involved myself; I wish to run this risk alone. Jesus Christ will see whether what I have said, comes from him or from me; Jesus Christ, without whose will the tongue of the pope cannot move and the hearts of kings resolve nothing.

"As for those who threaten me, I have nothing to say to them in reply, unless it be the words of Reuchlin: 'The poor man has nothing to fear, for he has nothing to lose.'² I have no property and no money, and I ask for none. If I at one time was held in some degree of honour and had some good reputation, he who began to deprive me of these, is completing his work. There remains nothing to me but this wretched body, weakened by so many trials: let them destroy it, by foul means or by fair, for the glory of God! They may thus abridge by a few hours the natural term of my life. Enough for me to have a precious Redeemer, a mighty High priest, Jesus Christ, my Lord. I will praise him as long as I have a breath of life. If none choose to praise him along with me, what matters it to me?"

¹ His Resolutions.

² Qui pauper est nihil timet, nihil potest perdere. (L. Epp. i. p. 118.)

These words enable us to read deep into Luther's heart!¹

While he was thus looking towards Rome with confidence, Rome was already nursing thoughts of being revenged on him. As early as the 3d of April, cardinal Raphael de Rovere had written in the pope's name to the elector Frederick, that suspicions were entertained with respect to the soundness of his faith, and that he ought to beware of protecting Luther. "Cardinal Raphael," says the latter, "would delight to see me burned by duke Frederick."² Thus did Rome begin to whet her weapons against Luther. The first blow she aimed was to alienate his protector from him, knowing that could she succeed in destroying the shelter behind which the Wittemberg monk lay secure, he would soon become an easy prey.

The German princes were very jealous of their reputation as Christian princes, so much so that the slightest suspicion of heresy alarmed them; a disposition of mind of which the court of Rome had ably taken advantage. Frederick had ever felt attached to the religion of his fathers; hence Raphael's letter could not fail to make a deep impression upon him. Still, it was a principle with the elector, in nothing to be precipitate. He knew that truth was not always on the side of the strongest; the transactions of the empire with Rome, had taught him to distrust that court's interested views; and he had discovered that in order to be a Christian, there was no need for his being the slave of the pope.

"He was not a man," says Melanchthon, "of that profane spirit which would instantly crush the germs of all changes."³ Frederick submitted himself to God. He carefully perused the

¹ Yes—they leave no doubt of the honesty of his purposes! How could envy or ambition fill the heart with such peace? It is enough for us to read such disclosures of Luther's inmost feelings, poured so spontaneously into the bosom of a friend, to enable us to appreciate the scandalous falsehood of the imputation, that the offended honour of his order must have been the cause of his acting as he did. Where is the fool who for that cause would have exposed his life to danger, and have thus persevered in his purpose without wavering;—where the man so rash as while conscious of such motives, to have dared to repose in the certainty of his Saviour's approbation? He that can believe, and after reading these and such like extracts from Luther's letters, can continue to maintain, that accusation,—is either wholly blinded by prejudice, or is a contemptible dissembler, in asserting that such hypocrisy, as Luther's mind was altogether incapable of, was possible.—L. R.

² L. Opp. (W.) xv. p. 339.

³ Nec profana judicia sequens quæ tenera initia omnium mutationum celerrimò opprimi jubent. (Melancht. Vit. L.)

writings which were then appearing, and would not permit the suppression of what he judged to be true.”¹ And this was what he had it in his power to do; for while master in his own states, he, at the same time, enjoyed a degree of consideration in the empire, equal at least to that which was bestowed on the emperor himself.

It is likely that Luther had some intimation of this letter from cardinal Raphael, which was received by the elector on the 11th of July; and possibly it may have been the prospect of the excommunication which this missive from Rome seemed to presage, that induced him to enter the pulpit at Wittemberg on the 15th of that month, and to deliver upon the subject a discourse that made a profound impression. He therein drew a distinction between internal and external excommunication; the former excluding from communion with God, the latter only from the outward ceremonies of the Church. “No one,” said he, “can reconcile the fallen soul with God but the Almighty himself. No one can separate a man from communion with God, unless it be the man himself by his own sins. Blessed is the man who dies in an unjust excommunication! While he suffers a severe chastisement at the hands of men, because of his love of righteousness, he receives the crown of everlasting blessedness from the hand of God.” . . .

Some openly approved of this bold language; others were more incensed by it than ever.

But Luther no longer stood alone, and albeit his faith required no other stay than that of God, a phalanx had now been formed around him, and was ready to defend him from his enemies. The people of Germany had heard the Reformer’s voice. His discourses from the pulpit, and his writings, seemed to dart lightning among his contemporaries, so as at once to awaken and to illuminate them. The fervour of his faith rushed forth in torrents of fire on men’s besotted hearts. The life with which God had animated that extraordinary soul, passed into the breathless carcase of the Church. Christendom, after having lain dormant for ages, now glowed with religious enthusiasm. The devotion of the people to the superstitions of Rome under-

¹ *Deo cessit, et ea quæ vera esse judicavit, deleri non voluit.* (Melancht. Vit. L.)

went a daily diminution; from day to day fewer hands were found offering money as the price of forgiveness of sins,¹ and the reputation of Luther at the same time was ever increasing. People looked to him, and greeted him affectionately and respectfully, as the dauntless defender of truth and liberty.² Doubtless all could not sound the depth of the doctrines he proclaimed; it was enough for the greater number to know that the new doctor had lifted himself against the pope, and, by the might of his eloquence, had shaken to its foundations the empire of the priests and the monks. Luther's assault was to them like one of the beacon fires kindled on the mountain tops, to give notice to a whole nation that the time for bursting from its chains has arrived. The Reformer did not doubt that from the part he had acted, already all that was generous among the people, by acclamation owned him as their chief. But, with respect to very many, the appearance of Luther amounted to more than this. The Word of God, which he handled so powerfully, cut into men's minds like a two-edged sword; and in many hearts ardent desires were enkindled for obtaining the assurance of pardon and of eternal life; so much so, that from the earliest ages, never had the Church experienced such a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. If the voice of Peter the hermit, and that of Bernard, had such an influence on the tribes of the middle ages, as to make them take up a perishable cross, Luther's voice led the men of his time to embrace the true cross—the cross that saves men's souls. The scaffolding that then oppressed the Church, had smothered everything under it; forms had destroyed life; and it was in this state of things, that the mighty voice with which the Reformer was gifted, diffused a life-giving breath over the soil of Christendom. On their first appearance Luther's writings carried along with them the believing and the unbelieving alike; the unbelieving because those positive doctrines which were afterwards to become fixed, were not as yet fully brought out, and the believing, because these doctrines were to be found in their germ in that living faith to which utterance was therein given with such overwhelm-

¹ *Rarescebant manus largentium.* (Cochlæus, 7.)

² *Luthero autem contrâ augebatur auctoritas, favor, fides, existimatio, fama: quòd tam liber acerque videretur veritatis assertor.* (Ib.)



ing energy. Hence the influence of those writings was immense; in an instant they pervaded Germany and the world. People everywhere felt a profound conviction that they were looking on, not at the establishment of a sect, but at the regeneration of the Church and of society. Those who then were born again by the breath of the Spirit of God, ranged themselves around the man who was its organ. Christendom became divided into two camps; the one combatting with the spirit against forms, the other with form against the spirit. Now, although it be true that all the appearances of force and grandeur were on the side of form, while that of the spirit bore tokens of impotency and littleness, form without spirit is but a hollow thing which must fall before the first breath, and any semblance of power it may have, serves but to incense men against it and to hasten its fall. Thus the simple word of truth created a mighty army for Luther.

II. There was need for this, for the great began to bestir themselves, and the empire and the Church were already combining their efforts for the removal of this troublesome monk. The emperor Maximilian was then holding an imperial diet at Augsburg. Six electors came to it in person at his call; all the states of Germany were represented at it; the kings of France, Poland, and Hungary, sent thither their ambassadors. These, both princes and envoys, all displayed the utmost magnificence. One object for which the diet had been summoned was the war with the Turks. It was feared that the sultan Selim, after having poisoned his father, rid himself of his brothers and their children, and carried his victorious arms into Armenia, Egypt, and Syria, not stopping there, might threaten Italy and Hungary; but death soon laid an arrest on his victories. Not the less did Leo X. pursue the project of a new crusade, and his legate keenly urged the German states to prepare themselves for war. "Let the ecclesiastics," said he, "pay the tenth and laymen the fiftieth part of their property; let each house furnish pay for a soldier; let the rich send in their yearly contributions; then all will go on well." The states, however had got a lesson from the bad use that had been made of such contributions on former occasions, and following the prudent advice of the elector Frederick, said they would think over the matter, at the same

time bringing forward new complaints against Rome. A discourse in Latin, published during the sitting of the diet, boldly pointed out the true source of danger to the German princes. "You would put the Turk to flight," said the author; "all well, but I fear much you are deceived as to who he is. He must be sought for in Italy, not in Asia. Each of our princes is powerful enough to defend his territories from the Turk of Asia: but as for the Turk at Rome, the whole Christian world is hardly capable of overcoming him. The one has never done us any harm; the other prowls about everywhere, slaking his thirst with the blood of the wretched."¹

The diet was called to attend to another matter of no less consequence. Maximilian wanted his grandson, Charles, who was already king of Spain and Naples, to be proclaimed king of the Romans, and his successor in the imperial dignity. But the pope knew his own interests too well, to have any wish to see the imperial throne occupied by a prince whose power in Italy might become formidable to him. The emperor thought that he had already gained over to his interests the greater number of the electors and of the states; but he found an energetic opponent in Frederick. In vain did he solicit him; in vain did the elector's ministers and best friends unite their prayers to those of the emperor; he was not to be shaken, and showed on that occasion, as was said of him, that he had sufficient firmness of soul never to depart from a resolution once adopted, after having acknowledged its being just. The emperor's design fell to the ground.

Thenceforth that prince sought to secure the goodwill of the pope in order that he might gain him over to his plans; and as a special proof of his devotedness, he wrote to him as follows, on the 5th of August: "Most holy father, we learned some days ago that a friar of the order of St. Augustine, called Martin Luther, has set himself to maintain sundry propositions on the trade in indulgences; the which so much the more displeases us as the said friar finds many protectors, among whom there are some powerful personages.¹ If your Holiness and the very

¹ Schröck, K. Gesch. n. d. R. I. p. 156.

² Defensores et patronos etiam potentes quos dictus frater consecutus est (Raynald, ad ann. 1518.)

worthy fathers of the Church (the cardinals) do not speedily exert their authority in putting a stop to these scandals, not only will these pernicious teachers seduce the simple, but they will lead on great princes to their ruin. We will take care that whatever your Holiness may determine in this respect for the glory of Almighty God, shall be observed by all in our empire."

This letter must have been written in consequence of a somewhat warm discussion between Maximilian and Frederick.¹ On the same day the elector wrote to Raphael de Rovere. He had been informed, no doubt, of the Emperor's having addressed himself to the Roman pontiff, and to parry the blow, put himself in communication with Rome.

"I never should wish otherwise," says he, "than to signify my submission to the universal Church.

"Accordingly, never have I defended the writings and sermons of doctor Martin Luther. Besides, I learn that he has always been willing to appear, with a safe-conduct, before impartial, learned, and Christian judges, to defend his doctrines, and to submit himself, in the event of his being convicted of error by the Scripture itself."²

Up to that hour Leo X. had allowed the matter to take its own course, but now, roused by the cries of theologians and of monks, he instituted an ecclesiastical court at Rome which was charged to try Luther, and in which the Reformer's great enemy, Sylvester Prierias, was at once prosecutor and judge. The

¹ From this example we perceive what principles determine the policy of those who have actual power in their hands with respect to their religion. Maximilian, who was in other respects very far from being a friend of papal domination, who was even reported to have projected uniting the papal dignity, that is to say, the ecclesiastical supremacy, with the imperial, warns the pope to be on his guard against the dangers that might arise from Luther's doctrines, only in order that the elector Frederick, who favoured Luther, might not obtain his wishes. How speedily are there not found prettexts for describing those, who have been compelled by their consciences to withstand any abuses that have crept into religion, as persons who endanger the peace and good order of the state, when men have other grounds for disliking them? And how, then, should they allow, on any such perilous condition, freedom of conscience with regard to the full exercise of the religion to which they feel bound in duty, as before God to attach themselves, absolutely to depend on the antecedent judgment formed of them by the state? Luther and the bold-hearted Reformers never, assuredly, would have consented to this. Now too, it is unreasonable and tends to deprive religion of all its energy, when the state chooses to exercise any such absolute supremacy, although in this respect every right-minded Christian stands already prepared, as Luther did, to give a reasonable account of his conduct. More cannot and ought not to be exacted.—L. R.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 169.

cause was speedily put into proper form, and the court summoned Luther to appear before it in person within sixty days.

Luther was quietly waiting at Wittemberg for the result which he thought could not fail to be produced by the very submissive letter he had addressed to the pope, when on the 7th of August, only two days after the sending off of the letters of Maximilian and of Frederick, the summons from the Roman tribunal was placed in his hands. "Just as I was looking for a benediction," said he, "I beheld the thunderbolt descend upon me. I was the sheep that troubled the water to the wolf. Tetzels escaped, and I had nothing for it but to allow myself to be devoured."

This summons threw Wittemberg into consternation, for whatever course Luther might pursue, danger was inevitable. Were he to appear at Rome, he must undoubtedly fall a victim to his enemies. Were he to refuse to appear, he must, according to custom, be condemned as contumacious, without any possibility of escape; it being known that the legate had received orders from the pope, to do his utmost to incense the Emperor and the German princes against him. His friends were in the greatest alarm. Shall the teacher of the truth go with his life in his hand to that great city, *drunk with the blood of God's saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus?* Shall it be endured that, let but one head lift itself from the midst of enslaved Christendom, and it must immediately fall? Shall the man whom God seems to have formed for resisting a power which nothing hitherto has been able to resist, be overthrown in his turn? Luther himself saw none but the elector that could save him; but he would rather die than compromise his prince. His friends fell at length upon a device which would not expose Frederick. Let him refuse to give Luther a safe-conduct, and the latter would then have a legitimate pretext for not appearing at Rome.

On the 8th of August, Luther wrote to Spalatin requesting him to use his influence with the elector in order to have him summoned to appear in Germany. "See," he farther adds in writing to Staupitz, "what snares are laid in order to get me near them, and how I am hedged round with thorns. But Christ lives and reigns yesterday, to day, and for ever. My conscience assures me that it is the truth that I have been teaching,

although its being taught by me makes it still more unpalatable. The Church is like Rebecca's womb; the little ones that are in it, must needs struggle with each other, so as even to risk the mother's life.¹ As for the rest, pray to God that my joy in this trial may not be excessive. May God not lay this evil to their charge!"

Luther's friends did not confine themselves to consultations and complaints. Spalatin, on the elector's part, wrote to Renner, the emperor's secretary: "Doctor Martin Luther willingly consents to have, for his judges, all the universities of Germany, except those of Erfurt, Leipsick, and Frankfort on the Oder, which have made themselves suspected. It is impossible for him to go in person to Rome?"²

The university of Wittemberg, on this occasion, sent a letter of intercession to the pope. "His bodily weakness," it says in speaking of Luther, "and the perils of the journey, would render it difficult, nay even impossible for him to comply with the order of your holiness. His sufferings and his prayers make us compassionate him. We therefore beseech you, holy father, as your obedient sons, to be pleased to regard him as a man who has never been contaminated with doctrines opposed to the sentiments of the Roman Church."

In the eagerness of its solicitude, the university addressed itself on the same day to Charles of Miltitz, a Saxon gentleman and chamberlain to the pope, who was much loved by Leo X. and in that letter bore still stronger testimony to Luther than it had ventured upon in the other. "Worthy father Martin Luther, Augustinian," it says, "is the noblest and most honourable member of our university. We have for several years witnessed and known his abilities, his learning, his extensive knowledge of the arts and literature, his blameless morals, and his entirely Christian conduct."³

This active exercise of love toward Luther on the part of those by whom he was surrounded, forms his highest eulogium.

While the issue of this affair was anxiously looked for, it

¹ Uterus Rebeccæ est : parvulos in eo collidi necesse est, etiam usque ad periculum matris. (L. Epp. i. p. 138.)

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 173.

³ L. Opp. (lat.) i. 183, 184 L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 171, 172.

ended far more easily than any could have anticipated. The legate, de Vio, mortified at having failed in the commission he had received, to prepare Germany for a general war against the Turks, wished to give an importance and lustre to his embassy to that country by some other striking act, and thought that could he but extinguish heresy, he might make his appearance again in Rome with glory. Accordingly, he besought the pope to remit this affair to him. Leo, on his side, was pleased with Frederick for having stoutly opposed the election of the youthful Charles, and he felt that he might again require his assistance. Without farther mention of the summons, he charged his legate, by a brief dated August 23d, to examine the affair in Germany. By this course the pope lost nothing; and even in the event of being able to induce Luther to give in a retractation, the excitement and scandal which his appearance at Rome must have occasioned, were thus avoided.

“We charge you,” said he, “to cause to appear personally before you, to prosecute, and to constrain, without delay, and as soon as you shall have received this writing from us, the said Luther, who has already been declared a heretic by our dear brother, Jerome, bishop of Asculum.”¹

The pope then prescribes the severest measures against Luther.

“Invoke to this effect the secular arm and aid of our dearest son in Christ, Maximilian, and of the other princes of Germany, and all the communities, universities, and potentates, ecclesiastical or secular. And should you apprehend him, see to his being strictly guarded, in order that he may be led before us.”²

It will be perceived that this indulgent concession of the pope was little better than a surer method of dragging Luther to Rome. Next come the milder measures:

“If he return to himself and crave pardon for such an offence, of himself, and without being invited thereto, we grant you power to receive him into the unity of the holy mother, the Church.”

The pope soon returns to maledictions:

¹ Dictum Lutherum hæreticum per prædictum auditorem jam declaratum. (Breve Leonis X. ad Thomam)

² Brachio cogas atque compellas, et eo in potestate tuâ redacto eum sub fideli custodia retineas, ut coram nobis sistatur. (Ibid.)

"If he persist in his obstinacy, and should you fail to bring him into your power, we authorise you to proscribe him in all parts of Germany, to banish, and curse, and excommunicate all who adhere to him, and to command all Christians to shun their presence."

"And to the end," continues the pope, "that this plague may be more easily extirpated, you shall excommunicate all prelates, religious orders, universities, communities, counts, dukes, and potentates, except the emperor Maximilian, who fail to seize the said Martin Luther and his adherents, and to send them to you under due and good guard. And if, which may God forefend, the said princes, communities, universities, and potentates, or any one belonging to them, offer an asylum in any wise to the said Martin and his adherents, by giving him, overtly or covertly, by themselves or by means of others, aid and advice, we place under interdict those princes, communities, universities, and potentates, with their cities, towns, rural districts, and villages, as also the cities, towns, rural districts, and villages to which the said Martin may have fled, as long as he shall abide therein and three days after he shall have quitted them."

This audacious chair, which pretends to represent on earth Him who said: "*God hath sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved*," then continues its anathemas, and after having pronounced what penalties should be imposed on ecclesiastics, it says:

"As for what regards the laity, if they do not instantly obey your orders, without any demur or opposition, we declare them infamous, with the exception of the most worthy emperor, incapable of acquitting themselves of any suitable action, deprived of Christian sepulture, and despoiled of all fiefs they may hold either from the apostolic see, or from any other lord whomsoever."^{1 2}

¹ Infamiae et inhabilitatis ad omnes actus legitimos, ecclesiasticæ sepulturæ, privationis quoque feudorum. (Breve Leonis X. ad Thomam.)

² We see here the precise marks of Anti-christ, the Beast of the Revelations, which was to forbid all from buying or selling, save such as had his mark and subjected themselves to him, (Rev. xiii. 17.) And how then should we hesitate to declare the popes of Rome, at some periods of their existence, to be such Anti-Christ. Granting that they may not have been the proper Anti-christ, which we have yet to look for, they were his forerunners. Still ought we to be on our guard against their craftiness:—and, indeed, it is in like manner the

Such was the fate that awaited Luther. The monarch of Rome conjured all things to conspire towards his ruin, allowing nothing to escape him, not even the repose of the grave. Luther's ruin seemed inevitable, for how possibly could he escape from such an immense combination against him? But here Rome deceived herself; a movement which had been originated by the Spirit of God, could not be arrested by the decrees of her chancellorship.

Not even the semblance of a fair and impartial inquest was in this case observed. Luther was declared a heretic, not only before being heard, but, further, long before the expiry of the term allowed for his appearance. The passions, never more imperious than in religious controversies, overleap all the forms of justice; and this not only in the Roman Church but in those Protestant Churches, also, which have declined from the gospel, and in short, wherever the truth has disappeared. All is thought fair, if it be against the gospel. Men who in any other case would scruple to commit the slightest injustice, are often seen not afraid to trample under foot all rules and all rights, from the moment that Christianity, and the testimony that is borne to it, are in question.¹

interests of all nations and princes, not to permit their influence to extend into territories which are foreign to them. It is likewise a thing quite unheard of, for the chief of a particular temporal state, or even a superior priest established in any particular country, to exercise the powers of government in other lands besides, even supposing these to be purely religious. The history of the Reformation exhibits the consequences. As long as the popes show their religious supremacy by other than religious testimonies, their authority over other countries must not be acknowledged as lawful, especially not where Protestants are to be found among the population. It is unbecoming even to enter into concordats with them.

They ought to be treated as persons whose presence is not to be presumed, and no oaths of allegiance to them ought to be permitted. Resistance to their influence is no oppression of conscience done to persons of the Romish persuasion, but it is merely to ward off that oppression of the conscience which otherwise threatens all other persuasions; it is merely the resistance to an encroachment which never can be proved to rest on grounds which the conscience can acknowledge. The man who cannot agree to this, ought to go to some other country, where he may have his co-religionists only to live with, or live under the immediate government of the pope. It is something different to give permission to the people of the Romish Church, to receive certain spiritual advices respecting religious exercises into their churches or houses, from their supreme pontiff. This may be done without risk or offence to others. Reasonable Roman Catholics would be satisfied with it, and would not arrogate to themselves or desire any political privileges beyond other persuasions.—L. R.

¹ This has been seen not long since in Geneva, and Switzerland. And now that people there have come to see their error, and have returned to a fair and just toleration, it seems as if the Netherlanders, so sedate a people in other

When Luther was informed of this brief afterwards, he expressed his indignation at it: "See," said he, "the most remarkable part of the affair: the brief was issued on August 23d, and I was summoned on the 7th of that month, so that between the summons and the brief, there was an interval of sixteen days. Now, reckon up and you will find that my Lord Jerome, bishop of Askelum, has proceeded against me, has passed sentence, has condemned me, and declared me to be a heretic, before the summons could have reached me, or, at the most, sixteen days after having sent it off. I now ask, where then are the sixty days allowed me in my summons? They began on the 7th of August, and ought to have ended on the 7th of October. . . . Is this the style and the method of the court of Rome, that in one day it calls a man before it, exhorts, accuses, judges, condemns, and declares to be condemned, a man at such a distance from Rome, and who meanwhile is in absolute ignorance of such proceedings? What will they reply to this? No doubt, that they had forgotten to purge their brain with hellebore before proceeding with such a farce."¹

But at the same time that Rome secretly deposited her thunderbolts in the hands of her legate, she sought, by mild and flattering speeches, to detach from the cause of Luther the prince whose power she most dreaded. That same day, 23d August, 1518, the pope wrote a letter to the elector of Saxony, in which he again had recourse to the artifices of the old policy which we have noticed, and set himself to flatter the prince's vanity.

"Dear Son," said the Roman pontiff, "when we think of your noble and praise-worthy race, and of you who are its chief and ornament; when we recall to mind how you and your ancestors have ever sought to maintain the Christian faith, together with the honour and the dignity of the holy see, we cannot believe that a man who forsakes the faith can throw himself on your Highness's favour, and boldly give the reins to his mischievous spirit. Nevertheless, it is reported to us from all parts that a certain friar, Martin Luther, hermit of the Order of St.

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 176.

respects, made it a point of honour to give themselves over to this insanity, and even to defend it with all apparent show of reasoning.—L. R.

Augustine, as a child of malice and a despiser of God, has forgotten his dress and his order, which consist in humility and in obedience, and boasts that he fears not either any man's authority or punishment from any man, in as much as he is assured of your favour and protection.

"But as we know that he deceives himself, we have thought it good to write to your highness and to exhort you, according to the Lord, to look to the honour of the name of a prince so Christian as you are, to defend yourself from these calumnies, you, who are the ornament, the glory, and the good odour of your noble race, and to beware not only of so grave a fault as that imputed to you, but of the very suspicion which the insensate hardihood of that friar has brought upon you."

Leo X. at the same time announced to Frederick that he had commissioned the cardinal Saint Sixtus to examine the matter, and enjoined him to deliver Luther into the legate's hands, "for fear," he adds, reverting again to his favourite argument, "lest the godly of the present or of future times should come to lament and say: 'The most pernicious heresy that ever afflicted the Church of God, owed its rise to the assistance and the favour accorded by that high and praise-worthy house.'"¹

Thus had Rome taken all her measures. With the one hand, she diffused the ever intoxicating incense of flattery, while she kept her vengeance and her terrors concealed in the other.²

All the powers of this world, the emperor, the pope, princes and legates, now began to bestir themselves against the lowly Erfurt friar, whose inward struggles we have been following. *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his anointed.*

III. The letter and brief had not yet reached Germany, and Luther was still in dread of seeing himself obliged to appear at Rome, when a happy event brought him comfort in his anxiety. He needed a friend into whose bosom he might pour his sorrows, and from whose faithful affection he might receive

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 173.

² Thus had Rome ever known how to flatter princes, in order that she might avail herself of their power for the oppression of the truth. Nor has she forgotten this artifice in our own days; as long as she has any hope of bringing princes over to her interests, she recommends and urges the people to subjection, yet favours revolts and excites to rebellion when these promise to extend her power.—L. R.

consolation in his hours of sadness; all this God supplied in the person of Melancthon.

George Schwarzerd was a skilful armourer at Bretten, a small town in the palatinate. On the 14th of February 1497, there was born to him a son called Philip, and who afterwards became illustrious under the name of Melancthon. George was much liked by the palatinate princes and those of Bavaria and Saxony, and was a man of the most thorough honesty. He often refused the price offered him by purchasers, and if he discovered that they were poor, would oblige them to take back their money. It was his habit to rise at midnight, when he would kneel down and pray. If the light broke without his having done so, he was displeased with himself the whole day after. Barbara, Schwarzerd's wife, was the daughter of an honourable magistrate, called John Reuter. She was of a mild temper, somewhat prone to superstition, but otherwise remarkable for wisdom and prudence. She is the author of the well known old German lines:—

“ No money's lost in giving alms,
Nor time, at church, in pray'rs and psalms,
To grease the wheels dispatch procures,
Ill-gotten wealth but loss secures;
God's Word to error never lures.”

And those other rhymes:—

“ He that money throws away
Faster than his fields repay,
Though no rope be his undoing,
Not the less will come to ruin.”¹

Philip was not eleven years old when his father died. Two days before he breathed his last, George called his son to his bed-side, and exhorted him to have the thought of God ever present to his mind: “ I foresee,” said the dying armourer, “ that the world is about to be convulsed by terrible tempests. I have witnessed great things, but still greater are now preparing. May God guide and guard you!” After receiving this paternal benediction, Philip was sent to Spires, that he might be saved the sight of his father's death. He left the spot in tears.

The boy's grandfather, worthy baillie Reuter, although he had

¹ Almosen geben arm nicht, &c. Wer mehr will verzehren, &c. (Müller's Reliquien.)

a son of his own, became a father to Philip, and took him with his brother George into his house. Shortly after, he gave the three boys for their preceptor John Hungarus, an excellent man, who afterwards, and to a very advanced age, preached the gospel very powerfully. He would allow nothing to pass with the young man, but punished him, though judiciously, for every fault: "Thus," says Melancthon in 1554, "did he make me a grammarian. He loved me as a son, and I him as a father: and we shall meet, I hope, in eternal life."¹

Philip distinguished himself by his mental excellence and by the ease with which he both acquired knowledge and could communicate what he had acquired. He could not live idle, and was ever looking about for some one to hold a discussion with on what he had heard.² It often happened that well informed strangers passed through Bretten and called on Reuter; on those occasions the baillie's grandson would go up to them, enter into conversation with them, and bear so hard upon them in argument, as to be the wonder of all who heard him. To the vigour of genius he united remarkable gentleness, so that he soon became a general favourite. He had a stutter in his speech, but like the illustrious Greek orator, so carefully did he set himself to correct that fault, that at length no trace of it could be discovered.

His grandfather dying, young Philip was sent with his brother and young uncle, John, to the school at Pforzheim; the three youths residing, while there, in the house of a female relative, sister of the famous Reuchlin. His eagerness in the acquisition of knowledge enabled Philip to make rapid progress in its various branches, and particularly in the study of Greek, of which he became passionately fond. Reuchlin often visited Pforzheim, became acquainted in his sister's house with her three young boarders, and was soon struck with Philip's replies to the questions he put. He gave him a Greek grammar and a Bible, two books which were to be the study of his whole life.

On Reuchlin's return from his second journey into Italy, his

¹ Dilexit me ut filium et ego illum ut patrem: et conveniemus, spero, in vita eterna. Melanct. Explicat. Evange.

² Quiescere not poterat, sed quærebat ubique aliquem cum quo de auditis disputaret. (Camerarius, Vit. Melanct. p. 7.)

young relative, then at the age of twelve, celebrated the day of his arrival by acting in his presence, along with some friends, a Latin comedy of his own composition. Ravished with the talent displayed by this mere boy, Reuchlin clasped him in his arms, called him his dear son, and laughingly presented him with the red hat he had received on being made a doctor. It was on this occasion that Reuchlin changed his name of Schwarzerd into Melanchthon, both signifying *black earth*, the one in German and the other in Greek. The greater number of the learned of that time thus translated their names into Greek or Latin.

At the age of twelve Melanchthon went to the university of Heidelberg, and there he began to slake that thirst for knowledge which was then consuming him. He was admitted a bachelor at the age of fourteen. In 1512 Reuchlin sent for him to come to Tübingen, where many of the most distinguished men of learning were at that time to be found. There being no department of knowledge that he did not think it his duty to investigate, he attended, at one and the same time, the lectures on theology, medicine, and jurisprudence; not that he cared for praise, but that he wanted to possess himself of learning and its fruits.

Holy Scripture chiefly occupied him. Persons who attended the church at Tübingen remarked that he had often a book in his hands, with which he occupied himself between the services. This unknown book looked larger than the prayer books, and thereupon it was reported that Philip, during those intervals, read profane books. But it was found that the object of their suspicions was a copy of the Holy Scriptures, printed a short while before by John Frobenius. He continued that course of reading for the rest of his life, with the most assiduous application. He had that precious volume always about him, and took it with him to all the public meetings to which he was called.¹ Rejecting the idle system of the schoolmen, he attached himself to the simple language of the gospel.² "Of Melanchthon,"

¹ Camerar. Vita Philip. Melanchthonis, p. 16.

² Here we have a genuine mark of true old Protestantism, or of well-grounded longings after better views, and a thorough restoration of obscured truth. This lay in the high appreciation in which he held the Bible; the absolute surrender of his heart to that divine teaching; the sincerity of his willingness steadfastly to adhere to the clear and plain sense of that word, and not to allow himself to be guided by his own conceptions or by human philosophy. How far removed

wrote at that time Erasmus to Œcolampadius, "I entertain the most favourable sentiments and magnificent hopes. Let but Christ vouchsafe that that young man may long survive us. He will quite eclipse Erasmus."¹ Melanchthon, nevertheless, shared in the errors of his age. "I shudder," said he, at a later period of his life, "when I think of the honour I paid to statues, while I was as yet a Papist."²

In 1514 he was made doctor in philosophy, and became a public teacher. He was then only seventeen. The grace and other attractions that marked his teaching, formed a most striking contrast to the insipid methods pursued at that time by the doctors, and, above all, by the monks. He warmly interested himself in the controversy in which Reuchlin was engaged with the obscurantés of his age. The charms of his conversation, his gentle and elegant manners, and the affection with which he was regarded by all who knew him, soon earned for him great influence and a solid reputation in the learned world.

It was now that Frederick conceived the idea of inviting some distinguished scholar to profess the ancient tongues at his university of Wittemberg, and applied to Reuchlin, who recommended Melanchthon. Frederick perceived what lustre that young Hellenist must shed upon the university he so fondly cherished, while Reuchlin, in his ecstasy at beholding so noble a field opening up before his young friend, sent him the words addressed by the Lord to Abraham: "*Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and I will make thy name great, and thou shalt be blessed.* Yea," continues the old man, "I trust it shall be so with thee, my dear Philip, my handiwork, and my solace."³ In this vocation Melanchthon owned a call from God. The university was grieved at his

from this is the spirit of that new Protestantism which follows its own imaginations only, twists and wrests the Bible according to these, and while it appeals, forsooth, to the example of the reformers, in so far as they stood up for the liberty of private inquiry, altogether departs from the sincerity of intention with which they availed themselves of that liberty, and from the course which they steadily pursued. How unreasonable and unjust is it, in the face of manifest truth, to accuse and render hateful the old and genuine Protestantism because of the conduct and spirit of the new, to which the old is directly opposed?—L. R.

¹ Is prorsus obscurabit Erasmum. (Er. Epp. i. p. 405.)

² Cohorresco quando cogito quomodo ipse accesserim ad statuas in papatu. (Explicat. Evangel.)

³ Meum opus et meum consolatium. (Corp. Ref. i. 33.)

departure; and yet it had some members who were jealous of him; nay, who were even his enemies. He left his native country exclaiming: "The will of the Lord be done!" He was at this time one and twenty.

Melanchthon performed the journey on horseback, in the company of some Saxon merchants, as if he had joined a caravan on the desert, for, says Reuchlin, he knew neither the places nor the roads.¹ He presented his respects to the elector, whom he found at Augsburg. At Nuremberg he formed ties with the excellent Pirekheimer; at Leipsick with the learned Hellenist, Mosellanus. In the last of these cities, the university honoured him with a public entertainment. The feast was truly academical; the dishes followed each other in rapid succession, and as each new dish was brought in, one of the professors rose and addressed Melanchthon in a Latin discourse which had been prepared before hand; upon which he immediately pronounced an unpremeditated reply. Wearied out at length with such a surfeit of eloquence: "Most illustrious men," said he, "allow me to reply once for all to your harangues; for, being unprepared, I cannot introduce the same variety into my answers that you have in your addresses." After that, the dishes were introduced without the accompaniment of a speech.²

Reuchlin's young relative arrived at Wittemberg on the 25th of August 1518, two days after Leo X. had subscribed the brief addressed to Cajetan and the letter to the elector.

The professors at Wittemberg were not so warm in their reception of Melanchthon as those at Leipsick had been; nor did the impression he made correspond at first with their expectations. They saw a young man, in appearance younger even than he really was, of inconsiderable stature, and having an aspect of feebleness and timidity. "And is this the illustrious doctor," said they, "whom the greatest men of the time, Erasmus and Reuchlin, so highly speak of?" . . . Neither Luther, whose acquaintance he made first, nor his colleagues, conceived any high hopes of him, on observing his youthfulness, his embarrassment, and his manners.

Four days after his arrival, he delivered his inaugural dis-

¹ Des wegs und der Orte unbekannt. (Corp. Ref. i. 33.)

² Camer. Vit. Mel. 26.

course. The whole university was assembled. The boy growing into manhood,¹ as Luther calls him, spoke in such elegant Latin, and displayed so much learning, so cultivated a mind, and so sound a judgment, that all his auditors were filled with admiration.

On concluding his discourse, all pressed forward to present him with their congratulations; but no one felt so happy as did Luther. He hastened to communicate to his friends the feelings that overflowed his heart. "Melanchthon," he writes to Spalatin on the 21st of August, "four days after his arrival, pronounced a harangue of such beauty and learning, as to be heard with universal approbation and with astonishment. We soon recovered from the prejudices created by his stature and personal appearance; we now praise and admire his words; we return thanks to the prince and to you for the service you have done to us. I ask for no other master of Greek. But I fear his delicate body may not be able to bear up under our mode of living, and that we shall not keep him long, because of the smallness of his salary. I understand that the Leipsick folks are already boasting that they can deprive us of him. O my dear Spalatin, see that you do not despise his age and person. The man is worthy of all honour."²

Melanchthon set himself immediately to explain Homer and St. Paul's epistle to Titus. He was full of energy. "I do my very utmost," he writes to Spalatin, "to gain for myself at Wittemberg the good will of all who love letters and virtue."³ Four days after his inauguration, Luther wrote further to Spalatin: "I most particularly recommend to you the most learned, and most amiable Greek, Philip. His class room is always full. All the theologians, in particular, attend his lectures. He succeeds in making all, whether of the highest, the middle, or the lowest form, fond of the study of Greek."⁴

Melanchthon could respond to the affection which Luther bore to him. He soon discovered in his Saxon friend a kindliness of character, a force of mind, a courage and a wisdom, such as he never had seen the like of in any other man. He became

¹ *Puer et adolescentulus, si ætatem consideres.* (L. Epp. i. 141.)

² L. Epp. i. 135.

³ *Ut Wittembergam litteratis ac bonis omnibus conciliem.* (Corp. Ref. i. 51.)

⁴ *Summos cum mediis et infimis, studiosos facit oræcitatis.* (L. Epp. i. 140.)

the object at once of veneration and of love. "If there be any one," he would say, "whom I very strongly love, and whom my whole soul embraces, it is Martin Luther."¹

Thus met Luther and Melanchthon, and their friendship ended only with their lives. We can never sufficiently admire the wisdom and the goodness of God in thus bringing together two men, so different, and yet so necessary the one to the other. What Luther had in ardour, impetuosity, and force, Melanchthon had in the clearness of his views, in wisdom, and in gentleness. Luther stimulated Melanchthon; Melanchthon moderated Luther. They were like the positive and negative poles in electrical bodies which mutually temper each other. Had Melanchthon been wanting to Luther, the stream might possibly have burst its banks. When Luther was wanting to Melanchthon, the latter hesitated, nay even gave way, where he ought not to have done so.² Luther effected much by energy of conduct; Melanchthon accomplished no less perhaps, while pursuing a gentler and more tranquil course. Both were honest, open, and generous; both were full of love for the Word of eternal life, and both served it with a fidelity and a devotedness which formed the master influence of their whole lives.

Moreover, Melanchthon's arrival accomplished a revolution not only at Wittenberg, but throughout all Germany, and indeed in the whole learned world. The attention he had bestowed on the Greek and Latin classics, and on philosophy, had given a regularity, a clearness, and a precision to his ideas, that threw a flood of new light on every subject he was called to treat, and gave it an indescribable charm in his hands. The gentle spirit of the Gospel imparted a teeming richness and a glow to his meditations, and the dryest departments of knowledge were invested in the expositions he gave of them, with a grace that captivated all his hearers. The barrenness communicated by the scholastic system to the art of teaching, ceased, and a new method, both of instruction and of study, commenced with Melanchthon. "We owe it to him," says an illustrious Ger-

¹ *Martinum si omnino in rebus humanis quidquam, vehementissime diligo et animo integerrimo complector.* (Melancht. Epp. i. 411.)

² Calvin wrote to Sleidan: *Dominus eum fortiore spiritu instruat, ne gravem ex ejus timiditate jacturam sentiat posteritas.*

man historian "that Wittemberg became the school of Germany."¹

One of the most remarkable circumstances attending the friendship now formed between Melanchthon and Luther, was the impulse towards the translation of the whole Bible communicated by the former to the latter. As early as in 1517, Luther had made some essays in translation. He procured all the Greek and Latin works he could obtain. But now, with the help of his dear Philip, his labour took a new spring; Luther constrained Melanchthon to share in his researches; he consulted him on difficult passages; and hence the work which was to become one of the greatest of the Reformer's undertakings, advanced at once more surely, and with more expedition.

IV. There can be no doubt that Melanchthon's arrival had a soothing effect on Luther's mind, by giving a pleasing distraction to his thoughts at a very critical moment; no doubt, amid the delightful reciprocities of a new-born friendship, and the biblical labours to which he now with fresh zeal devoted himself, he could at times forget Rome, Prierias, Leo, and the ecclesiastical court before which he was called to appear. These, however, were but transient intervals of ease, for his thoughts continually recurred to the dread tribunal before whose bar his implacable enemies had caused him to be summoned. And with what terror must not such thoughts have overwhelmed the soul that had any object in view but truth! Yet Luther felt no such dread; full of trust in the faithfulness and in the power of God, he stood firm, and was ready to expose himself singly to the wrath of enemies, more terrible than those that had consigned John Huss to the flames.

A few days after Melanchthon's arrival, and before it could be known that the pope had resolved to cite Luther to appear at Augsburg instead of Rome, the latter wrote to Spalatin: "I ask not our sovereign to make the smallest effort in defence of my theses; my wish is to be delivered over, and thrown alone into the hands of my adversaries. Let him allow the whole storm to burst upon me. What I have taken in hand to defend, I hope, by the help of Christ, to be able to maintain; and as for

¹ Plank.

violence, we must indeed submit to it; nevertheless, without abandoning the truth."¹

Luther's courage proved contagious, so that even the gentlest and most timid, when they saw the imminent danger that threatened the witness to the truth, gave utterance to their feelings in language the most forcible and indignant. The cautious and pacific Staupitz wrote to Spalatin on September 7th: "Cease not to urge the prince, your master and mine, not to allow himself to be frightened by the roaring of the lions. Let him defend the truth, without disquieting himself about Luther or Spalatin, or the order. Let there be but a place in which one may speak out, freely and without fear. I know that the plague of Babylon, I was almost going to say of Rome, breaks out against whoever may attack the abuses of those who sell Jesus Christ. I have myself seen a preacher who taught the truth precipitated from the pulpit; I have seen him, even on a festival, bound and dragged to prison. Others have witnessed things even more cruel. Therefore, dearest friend, do you act so as to get His Highness to continue firm to his opinions."²

The order for his appearance before the cardinal legate at Augsburg, at last arrived, and Luther had now to do with one of the princes of the Church of Rome. All his friends were urgent with him not to go.³ They were afraid that snares might be laid for him, and attempts made on his life, even before his journey was over. Some set themselves to procure for him an asylum to flee to. Staupitz himself, the timid Staupitz, felt agitated at the sight of the dangers that awaited that friar Martin, whom he had drawn forth from the obscurity of a cloister, and launched upon the stormy scene where his life was now in jeopardy. Ah! had it not been better for the poor friar to have remained for ever unknown? It was now too late. He desired at least to do all in his power to save him, and he wrote to him accordingly from his monastery at Salzburg, on September 15th, urging him to fly and to take advantage of an asylum near him. "To me it appears," he told him, "that the whole world is

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 139.

² Jen. Aug. i. p. 384.

³ Contra omnium amicorum consilium comparui.

incensed, and has coalesced against the truth. Jesus crucified was hated, all the same. I do not see that you have anything but persecution to look for. Soon no one will be able, without the pope's permission, to search the Scriptures and seek Jesus Christ there, that nevertheless being what Christ enjoins. You have but few friends, and God grant that the dread of your adversaries may not hinder those few from declaring in your favour! The wisest thing you can do, is to leave Wittemberg for a time, and to come to me. We shall then live and die together." "This, too," Staupitz adds, "is the advice of the prince."¹

Luther now received the most alarming intimations from various quarters. Count Albert of Mansfeld sent him notice that he must beware of setting out on his journey, as several great lords had pledged themselves by an oath to seize his person, and strangle or drown him.² But nothing could daunt him. He had no idea of taking advantage of the vicar-general's offer. He would not conceal himself in the obscurity of the monastery at Salzburg; he would faithfully remain upon the stormy scene where the hand of God had placed him. It was by persevering in spite of his enemies, and proclaiming the truth aloud before the world, that the reign of that truth was advanced. Why then should he fly? He was not of those who draw back unto perdition, but of those who keep the faith, to the saving of their souls. Unceasingly did there resound in his heart that saying of the Master whom he desired to serve, and whom he loved more dearly than his life: *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven.* Everywhere do we find in Luther and the Reformation, the recurrence of that dauntless courage, that high-toned morality, that boundless charity, which had been exhibited to the world at the first advent of Christianity. "I am like Jeremiah," said Luther at the time of which we now treat, "a man of contention and strife; but the more they multiply their threats, the more do they augment my joy. My wife and children are fully provided for; my houses and possessions are in excellent order."³ They

¹ Epp. i. 61.

² Ut vel stranguler, vel baptiser ad mortem. (L. Epp. i. 129.)

³ Uxor mea et liberi mei provisi sunt. (L. Epp. i. 129.) He had none of these.

have already torn to pieces my honour and reputation. One thing only remains to me; it is this miserable body: let them take it; they may thus abridge my life by a few hours. But as for my soul—that they can never take. He who would bear Christ's Word in the world, ought to look for death every hour; for our husband is a bloody husband.”¹

The Elector was now at Augsburg, and shortly before leaving that city and the diet, he gave the legate his promise that Luther should appear before him. Spalatin wrote to his friend, on the part of the prince, that the pope had appointed a commission to give him a hearing in Germany, that the elector would not allow him to be dragged to Rome, and that he should be preparing to set out for Augsburg. Luther resolved to obey. The intimation transmitted to him by the count of Mansfeld, induced him to ask a safe-conduct from Frederick, who replied that it was not necessary, and sent him only recommendations to some of the most distinguished counsellors of Augsburg. He saw, also, to his being supplied with some money for his travelling expenses; and thus did the Reformer, poor and defenceless, set off on foot, to put himself into the hands of his adversaries.²

But what must have been his feelings as he left Wittemberg and took the road for Augsburg, where the pope's legate was awaiting him! The object of this journey was not like that which took him to Heidelberg, an amicable meeting; he was about to appear before the delegate of Rome without a safe conduct, and was perhaps going to encounter death. But his faith was not a faith of mere show; faith was with him a reality. Hence it gave him inward peace, and he could go forward unappalled, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, to give his testimony to the gospel.

He reached Weimar on the 28th of September, and lodged in the monastery of the Cordeliers. One of the monks could not turn his eyes away from him; this was Myconius, who now beholding Luther for the first time, wished to go up to him, and to say that he was indebted to him for peace of soul, and that

¹ Sic enim sponsus noster, sponsus sanguinum nobis est. (L. Epp. i. 129.) See Exod. iv. 25.

² Veni igitur pedester et pauper Augustam. . . . (L. Opp. lat. in præf.)

it was his whole heart's desire to labour along with him. But Myconius was strictly watched by his superiors, and was not allowed to speak to Luther.¹

The elector of Saxony was then holding his court at Weimar, on which account probably the Cordeliers gave the doctor a welcome. The feast of St. Michael fell on the day after his arrival. Luther said mass, and was even invited to preach in the castle Church — a mark of favour which the prince was fond of bestowing on him. He preached with much fulness in presence of the court, upon the text of the day, being the 1st and 2d verses of the xviii. chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. He spoke forcibly against hypocrites and those who boasted of their own righteousness, but said nothing about the angels, although such was the custom on St. Michael's day.

This fearlessness on the part of the Wittemberg doctor, as he was repairing, calmly and on foot, to answer to a citation which in the case of so many of his predecessors, had been the prelude to their death, astonished those who witnessed it. They first felt an interest in him, then admired, and at length sympathised with him. John Kestner, purveyor to the Cordeliers, was alarmed at the thought of the dangers that awaited his guest, and said to him: "Brother, you will find Italians at Augsburg, who are knowing men, subtle antagonists, and who will give you much to do. I fear you will not be able to defend your cause against them. They will toss you into the fire, and their flames will consume you."² Luther gravely replied: "Dear friend, pray to our Lord God, who is in heaven, and present to him a *Paternoster* for me and for his dear child Jesus, whose cause is my cause, in order that he may be gracious to him. If he maintain his cause, mine is maintained. But if he desires not to maintain it, certainly it is not I that will maintain it, and it is he who will bear the disgrace of losing it."³

¹ Ibi Myconius primum vidit Lutherum: sed ab accessu et colloquio ejus tunc est prohibitus. (Melch. Adami, Vit. Myc. p. 176.)

² Profecto in ignem te conjicient et flammis exurent. (Ibid. p. 176. Myconis ref. hist. p. 30.)

³ When we follow Luther, step by step, in this journey, and attentively watch his proceedings, we are more and more filled with admiration, and feel that a sincere love for the truth, and the perfect assurance which from his inmost soul he entertained with respect to it, and not ambition or any other unjustifiable motive, could have enabled him thus resolutely to encounter the greatest danger. We

Luther continued his journey and arrived at Nuremberg. There he went to pay his respects to a prince of the Church, and wished to appear in a decent dress. The coat he wore was old when he began his journey, and it had suffered much by the way, so that he borrowed a frock from his faithful friend Wenceslas Link, preacher at Nuremberg.

Link, of course, was not the only friend he saw; he must have met with others at Nuremberg, including Scheurl, the town secretary, the illustrious painter, Albert Durer, to whose memory Nuremberg is now erecting a statue, and others besides. He strengthened himself by his intercourse with these excellent men of the earth, while many monks and laymen took alarm at his journey and endeavoured to shake his resolution by conjuring him to turn back. The letters he wrote from that city show the spirit by which he then was animated; "I have met," says he, "with pusillanimous persons, who would persuade me not to repair to Augsburg, but I am resolved to go there. May the Lord's will be done! Jesus reigns even at Augsburg and in the midst of his enemies. Let Christ live; let Luther die and every sinner, according as it is written! Let the God of my salvation be exalted! Comport yourself well, persevere, be steadfast; for we must be reproved either by men or by God: but God is true and man a liar."¹

Link and an Augustinian monk, called Leonard, could not make up their minds to suffer Luther to advance alone in the face of the dangers that threatened him. They were acquainted with his character, they knew that with his disregard of self, and with his personal courage, he might be wanting in prudence, and accordingly they accompanied him. When about five leagues from Augsburg, Luther, who was no doubt exhausted by the fatigues of his journey and the various agitations of his heart, was seized with a violent pain in his stomach, and thought himself dying. His two friends were greatly distressed, and hired a car on which they conveyed the doctor to Augsburg. They arrived there on the evening of Friday, the seventh of

shall have the same observation to make on his whole conduct with regard to Cajetan.—L. R.

¹ Vivat Christus, moriatur Martinus. . . . (Weismanni Historia sacr. novi. Test., p. 1465.) Weismann had read this letter in manuscript. It is not to be found in M. de Wette's collection.

October, and drew up at the monastery of the Augustinians. Luther was much fatigued, but soon regained his strength ; his enfeebled body no doubt owing its speedy recovery to his strong faith and constitutional vivacity.

V. Hardly had Luther arrived in Augsburg and he had as yet seen no one there, when he begged Wenceslas Link to go and announce his arrival to the legate, to whom he desired to show all proper respect. Link did this, and submissively told the cardinal, on the part of the Wittemberg doctor, that the latter was ready to appear before him whenever he chose to send for him. De Vio rejoiced at this news. He had the fiery heretic at length in his grasp ; and he promised himself that his victim should not quit the walls of Augsburg, now that he was once within them. At the same time that Link went to see the legate, the monk Leonard set off to announce Luther's arrival at Augsburg to Staupitz. The vicar-general had written to the doctor, that he would certainly come to him the moment he knew him to be there, and Luther was anxious that no time should be lost in apprising him of his arrival.¹

The Diet had now come to a close ; the emperor and the electors had separated in various directions ; and though the former had not, indeed, finally left the place, he was gone to hunt in the neighbourhood. Thus the ambassador of Rome alone remained at Augsburg. Had Luther arrived during the sitting of the Diet, he would have found powerful defenders there ; but now all seemed likely to bend under the weight of the papal authority. The name of the judge before whom Luther was to appear, was not calculated to re-assure him. Thomas de Vio, surnamed Cajetan, from the town of Gaëta, in the kingdom of Naples, where he was born in 1469, had given rise to great expectations of future eminence from his youth up. At the age of sixteen, he entered the order of Dominicans, against the express will of his relations. He afterwards became general of that order and cardinal of the Roman Church. But what was worse for Luther, this learned doctor was one of the most zealous defenders of that scholastic theology which the Reformer had all along pitilessly assailed. Moreover, his learn-

¹ Epp. i. p. 144.

ing, the severity of his character, and the pureness of his morals, secured for him in Germany a degree of authority and influence which no other Roman courtier could have readily obtained, and to this reputation for sanctity, he no doubt owed his being sent thither. Rome saw that he would admirably serve her purposes. Thus even the personal virtues of Cajetan rendered him still more formidable. As for the rest, there was little complication in the task committed to him. Luther had already been declared a heretic; if he did not choose to retract, it was the legate's duty to commit him to prison; and should he escape from his grasp, to smite with excommunication whoever should afford him shelter. Such was the course to be pursued on the part of Rome, by the prince of the Church into whose presence Luther was now summoned.¹

Refreshed and re-invigorated by a night's rest, Luther, on the morning of Saturday, the 8th of October, began to review the singular position in which he was placed. He was submissive, and waited until God should make known his will by events; nor had he long to wait. He received a message from a person quite unknown to him, but who professed being wholly devoted to his interests, saying that he was about to pay him a visit, and that Luther should take care not to appear before the legate until they should first have an interview. This message came from an Italian courtier, called Urban of Serra-Longa, who had often been in Germany as envoy of the margrave of Montferrat. He knew the elector of Saxony, to whom he had presented credentials, and after the margrave's death had attached himself to the cardinal de Vio.

This man's finesse and manners formed the most striking contrast with Luther's noble frankness and generous candour. The Italian speedily arrived at the monastery of the Augustinians. The cardinal had sent him to sound the Reformer, and to prepare him for the retractation he expected him to make. Serra-Longa thought that the time he had spent in Italy, must give him great advantages over the other courtiers in the cardinal's train, and these he hoped to play off with much effect upon this German monk. He appeared attended by two domestics, and

¹ The Pope's Bull. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 174.)

professed having come at his own suggestion, wishing to act the part of a friend to a favourite of the elector of Saxony, and to show his attachment to holy Church. After giving Luther the most affectionate greeting, the diplomatist added in a tone of apparent affection :

"I come to offer you good and wholesome counsel. Re-attach yourself to the Church. Yield to the cardinal without reserve. Retract your insults. Recollect the abbé Joachim of Florence: you know he said heretical things, and yet was declared not to be a heretic, because he retracted his errors."¹

Luther then offered to justify himself.

SERRA-LONGA.—"Beware of doing that! . . would you pretend to enter the lists, as at a tournament, with the legate of his Holiness?" . . .

LUTHER.—"If it can be proved that I have taught anything contrary to the Roman church, I shall be my own judge and will immediately retract. The whole question will be to know whether the legate does not rest more upon St. Thomas than the faith will warrant. If he does so, I won't yield to him."

SERRA-LONGA.—"What! what! so you pretend to break lances!" . . .

The Italian then began to utter things which Luther calls horrible. He argued that a man might maintain false propositions provided they brought in money and filled the strong-boxes; that people would do well to beware of disputing, at the universities, about the power of the pope; that they ought to maintain, on the contrary, that the pontiff had the power by a wink to alter or suppress articles of faith; and other such things.² But the cunning Italian soon saw he was forgetting himself; he returned to milder language and endeavoured to

¹ This abbot Joachim is apparently the same person otherwise known by the name of Joachim, abbot of Flora, who lived in the time of the crusades, uttered many presages with respect to a reformation which he said was preparing, declared that Antichrist would be a pope, and was already born at Rome, and, moreover, entertained some erroneous views with regard to the Trinity. As he had many adherents, particularly among the Franciscans of the times that followed, his sentiments were condemned by pope Innocent III. at the second Lateran council, as will be found where both are mentioned by Mosheim in his Church History, and by Maimbourg in his History of the Crusades. Yet neither speaks of his recantation; the former merely stating that his person was not condemned.—L. R.

² Et nutu solo omnia abrogare, etiam ea quæ fidei essent. (L. Epp. i. 144.)

persuade Luther that he ought in all things to submit himself to the legate, and to retract his doctrine, his oaths, and his theses.

The doctor, who was at first disposed to put some trust in the fair protestations of the orator Urban (as he calls him in the accounts he has given of what passed), was now convinced that they were little worth, and that he was far more inclined to side with the legate than with him. Accordingly, he became somewhat less communicative, and confined himself to saying, that he was quite disposed to show humility, to give proofs of obedience, and to render satisfaction in the things on which he may have been mistaken. At these words Serra-Longa joyfully exclaimed: "I shall hasten to the legate; you will follow me. All will soon go on as well as possible, and there will be an end of it."¹ . . .

He walked out. The Saxon monk, with more discernment than the Roman courtier, thought within himself: "This cunning Sinon has been ill instructed in his Greek art."² Luther was in suspense betwixt hope and fear. Meanwhile hope had the ascendancy. The visit and strange assertions of Serra-Longa, whom he afterwards calls an untoward mediator,³ revived his courage.

The councillors and other inhabitants of Augsburg, to whom the elector had recommended Luther, eagerly paid their respects to the monk whose name was now re-echoed throughout Germany. Peutingger, a councillor of the empire, and one of the most distinguished of the Augsburg patricians, who often invited Luther to his table, the councillor Langemantel, doctor Auerbach of Leipsick, the two brothers Adelman, both canons, with many more such, repaired to the monastery of the Augustinians, and cordially greeted this extraordinary man who had made a long journey in order to put himself into the power of one of Rome's underlings. "Have you a safe-conduct," they asked.—"No," replied the dauntless monk.—"How fool-hardy you are," they exclaimed. "It was," said Luther, "a fair term to apply to the rashness of my folly." All unanimously urged him not to go to the legate until he had obtained a safe-conduct from

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 179.

² Hunc Sinonem, parum consulte instructum arte Pelasgica. (L. Epp. i. 144.) See Virgil's *Æneid*, book ii.

³ Mediator ineptus. (L. Epp. i. 144.)

the emperor himself. The public had probably heard something of the papal brief of which the legate was the bearer.

"But," answered Luther, "I came without safe-conduct to Augsburg, and am arrived safe and sound."

"The elector has recommended you to us; you ought therefore to obey us, and to comply with our directions," replied Langemantel, affectionately but firmly.

Doctor Auerbach assented to these representations. "We know," said he, "that from the depths of his soul the cardinal is incensed at you, in the greatest degree.¹ Italians are not to be trusted."²

Canon Adelmann in like manner insisted: "You have been sent without defence, and it has been forgotten to provide you with the very thing you most need."³

His friends engaged to procure from the emperor the safe-conduct required. They then told Luther how many persons, even of high rank, had a leaning in his favour. "The minister of France even, who left Augsburg only a few days ago, has been speaking of you in the most honourable manner."⁴ This hint struck Luther, and he afterwards called it to mind. Thus all that could most command respect among the burghers of one of the first cities of the empire, was already gained over to the Reformation.

When they had conversed thus far at the monastery, Serralonga re-appeared. "Come," said he to Luther, "the Cardinal is waiting for you. I am going myself to take you to him. You must be taught how to comport yourself in his presence. On entering the hall where you are to find him, you must throw yourself prostrate, with your face on the ground; when he has told you to rise, you will place yourself on your knees; and before standing upright, you must wait till he bids you.⁵ You must remember that it is a prince of the Church before whom you have to appear. As for the rest, fear nothing: all will end soon and easily."

¹ Sciunt enim cum in me exacerbatissimum intus, quicquid simulet foris. . . (L. Epp. i. p. 143.)

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 201.

³ Ibid. p. 203.

⁴ Seckend., 144.

⁵ Seckend., p. 130.

As Luther had promised this Italian that he would follow him whenever he should invite him to do so, he now felt embarrassed. Notwithstanding, he made no scruple of telling him the advice that his Augsburg friends had given him, and spoke of a safe-conduct.

"Beware well of asking for one," said Serra-Longa; "you have no need of it. The legate is favourably disposed, and quite prepared to settle the matter in a friendly way. Should you ask for a safe-conduct, you will spoil the whole affair."¹

"My gracious Lord, the elector of Saxony," said Luther, "has recommended me to several honourable men in this city. They advise me to undertake nothing without a safe-conduct: I ought to follow their advice; for should I fail to do so, and anything untoward happen, they would write to the elector, complaining that I had refused to listen to them."

Luther persisted in his resolution, and Serra-Longa found himself obliged to return to his master, and to tell him of the difficulty he had encountered in his mission at the very moment he had flattered himself that it was crowned with success.

Thus terminated the conferences of that day with the orator of Monferrat. Luther received another invitation, which was addressed to him with a very different intention. The prior of the Carmelites, John Frosch, was an old friend of his, and two years before, as licentiate in theology, had defended certain theses under the presidency of Luther. He came to see him, and strongly urged him to come and stay with him; considering himself entitled to the honour of having the doctor of Germany as his guest. Even now men were not afraid to do him homage in the very presence of Rome; even now the weaker had become the stronger. Luther accepted, and left the monastery of the Augustinians for that of the Carmelites.

The day did not close over him without much serious reflection. The difficulty of his position was evident alike from the eagerness displayed by Serra-Longa and the alarms expressed by the councillors. Nevertheless, he had for his protector God who is in heaven, and guarded by him he could sleep undismayed.

The day following was a Sunday;² and he enjoyed some

¹ L. Opp. (I.) 179.

² 9th October.

repose. And yet he had to endure another kind of fatigue. Nothing was spoken of throughout the city but Doctor Luther, and all the world wished to see, as he writes to Melancthon, "this new Erostratus who had kindled so immense a conflagration."¹ People pressed on him as he walked along, and no doubt the good doctor smiled at this singular eagerness.

But he had yet to undergo a different kind of importunities, for if people were eager to see him, still more did they desire to hear him. On all hands he was requested to preach, and nothing gave him such joy as to announce God's Word. It would have been delightful to him to preach Jesus Christ in that great city and in the solemn circumstances in which he stood, but on this, as on many other occasions, he showed a very just perception of what was proper, and much respect for his superiors. He declined preaching, being afraid that the legate might suppose that he did so, merely to annoy and to brave him. Such moderation and wisdom were, no doubt, well worth a sermon.

Meanwhile, the cardinal's people gave him no rest. They returned to the charge. "The Cardinal," they told him, "gives you assurances of his unreserved grace and favour: why are you afraid?" They strove, by alledging a thousand reasons, to make him decide upon appearing before him. "He is a very merciful father," said one of these messengers to him. But another went up to him and whispered into his ear: "Don't believe what they tell you. He does not keep his word."² Luther remained steady to his purpose.

On Monday morning, October 10th, Serra-Longa returned to the charge, having made it a point of honour to succeed in his negotiation. Hardly had he arrived when he said in Latin: "Why won't you come to the cardinal? . . . He is waiting for you with the most indulgent disposition. The whole question lies in six letters: *REVOCA*, retract. Come along; you have nothing to fear."

Luther thought within himself that that little word, though consisting but of six letters, had a world of meaning in it, but without entering into the merits of the question, he replied:

¹ Omnes cupiunt videre hominem, tanti incendi Herostratum. (L. Epp. i. p. 146.)

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 205

“As soon as I shall have obtained the safe-conduct, I will appear.”

Serra-Longa quite lost his temper on hearing these words. He insisted. He made new representations; but he found Luther not to be shaken. Then, still waxing fiercer, he exclaimed: “You no doubt suppose that the elector will take up arms in your behalf, and for your sake will be content to risk the loss of the territories which he has received from his forefathers?”

LUTHER. “God keep me from doing that!”

SERRA-LONGA. “Where then will you find refuge when forsaken by every one?”

LUTHER.—With a smile and turning upwards the look of faith, “Under heaven.”¹

Serra-Longa was for an instant silent, struck as he was with this sublime and unexpected reply; he then continued. “What would you do, had you the legate, the pope, and all the cardinals in your power, as they now have you in theirs?”

LUTHER.—“I would show them all respect and honour. But the Word of God, for me, takes precedence of all else.”

SERRA-LONGA, smiling and moving his fingers as the Italians do: “Hem! hem! all honour! . . . I believe no such thing.” . . . He then went out, leapt into the saddle and disappeared.

Serra-Longa no more came to see Luther; but he long remembered both the resistance he had met with in the Reformer, and what his master himself was soon to experience. We shall find him, at a later period, loudly demanding Luther’s blood.

Serra-Longa had not long left the doctor when the safe-conduct which he had solicited arrived, his friends having obtained it from the councillors of the Empire. The latter, it is probable, had consulted the emperor on the subject, he being at no great distance from Augsburg. It would even appear from what fell afterwards from the cardinal, that not wishing to offend him, they had asked his consent. And this perhaps is

¹ Et ubi manebis? . . . Respondi: Sub cœlo. (L. Opp. in præf.) Dean Milner very tamely translates this, “in the open air.” I have adopted M. D’Aubigne’s version. TR

what led de Vio to work upon Luther by means of Serra-Longa; for openly to have opposed the granting of a safe-conduct, would have revealed intentions which he must have wished to conceal. It was a surer course to induce Luther to desist from his request; but the Saxon monk soon showed that he was not a man to be diverted from his purpose.

Luther was now to make his appearance. Not that in asking for a safe-conduct he trusted in an arm of flesh, for he well knew that an imperial safe-conduct had failed to save John Huss from the flames; he merely wished to do his duty in complying with the advice of his master's friends. The Lord had the result in his hands. Should He ask back his life, he was ready to resign it with joy. At that solemn crisis, he felt the want of communion with his friends, particularly with Melanchthon, who had become very dear to him, and to whom he took advantage of a few moments of leisure, to write as follows:

"Comport thyself like a man," says he, "as you have done on other occasions. Teach our youth what is right and according to God. As for me, I am about to be sacrificed for you and for them, if such be the Lord's will.¹ I would rather die, and even, which to me would be the greatest calamity, be deprived for ever of your sweet companionship, than retract what duty requires me to teach, and thus to damage perhaps by my fault the excellent studies to which we devote ourselves.

"Italy now, like Egypt once, is plunged in darkness so thick that it may be felt. None there knows aught of Christ, or of what relates to him; meanwhile they are our lords and masters with respect to faith and manners. Hence God's wrath has gone forth against us, as saith the prophet: *I will give them young men for their governors, and children shall rule over them.* Comport thyself well according to the Lord, my dear Philip, and avert God's wrath by sincere and fervent prayers."

On being informed that Luther was to wait upon him on the following day, the legate called a meeting of those Italians and Germans in whom he could best confide, to deliberate with them about the course they ought to pursue with respect to the Saxon monk. Opinions were divided at this meeting. He

¹ Ego pro illis et vobis vado immolari. . . . (L. Epp. i. 146.)

ought, said one, to be compelled to retract. We ought to apprehend him, said another, and to throw him into prison. A third considered that it would be better to put him to death. A fourth, that they should try to gain him over by gentleness and kindness. The Cardinal seems at first to have resolved to adopt this last course.¹

VI. The day fixed for the conference at length arrived.² Aware that Luther had professed himself ready to retract whatever might be proved to be opposed to the truth, the legate was sanguine in his hopes, and doubted not that it would be easy for a man of his rank and learning, to bring back this monk to obedience to the Church.

Luther repaired to the legate's residence, accompanied by his host and friend, the prior of the Carmelites, by two friars of that monastery, by doctor Link, and by an Augustinian, probably the same that came with him from Nuremberg. He had no sooner entered the legate's palace than all the Italians forming the court of this prince of the Church, ran up, each eager to see the famous doctor, and pressing around him, so that he could hardly move on. Luther found the apostolic nuncio and Serra-Longa in the hall where the cardinal was waiting for him. The reception was cold but polite, and conducted according to Roman etiquette. In compliance with Serra-Longa's directions, Luther prostrated himself before the cardinal; on the latter bidding him rise, he placed himself on his knees; and on a new order from the legate, he stood upright. Several of the most distinguished Italians attached to the legate found their way into the hall, in order to be present at the interview; they were particularly anxious to see the German monk humble himself before the pope's representative.

The legate remained silent, supposing, says a contemporary, that Luther was about to draw out a recantation. Luther, on his side, meekly waited until the prince should address him, but not perceiving any signs of this, and taking his silence for an invitation to speak first, he did so in these words:

"Most worthy Father, in compliance with the summons of his papal holiness, and at the request of my gracious lord, the

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 183.

² Tuesday the 11th of October.

elector of Saxony, I appear before you as a submissive and obedient son of the holy Christian Church, and I acknowledge that it is I who have published the propositions and the theses now in question. I am ready to listen with all obedience to the matters whereof I am accused, and should I be in error, to submit to instruction according to the truth."

The cardinal, being resolved to give himself the airs of a tender father who deeply compassionated a wandering child, on this adopted the most friendly tone; he commended Luther's humility, expressed the high satisfaction it gave him, and said: "My dear son, thou hast unsettled all Germany by thy disputation on the indulgences. I understand that, as a doctor, thou art very learned in the Scriptures and hast many disciples. Therefore, if thou desire to be a member of the Church, and to find in the pope a most gracious lord, attend to what I say."

After this exordium, the legate did not hesitate to tell him, at once, all that he expected from him, so great was the confidence he felt that he would submit: "See," said he to him, "here are three articles which, in obedience to orders from our most holy Father, pope Leo X. I have to present to thee. First of all, thou must return within thyself, own thy faults, and retract thine errors, propositions, and discourses; secondly, thou must abstain in future from disseminating thine opinions, and, thirdly, thou must engage to be more moderate, and avoid all that may grieve or unsettle the Church."

LUTHER.—"I crave, most worthy Father, that the brief of the pope, in virtue of which you have received full powers to treat with me, be communicated to me."

Serra-Longa and the other Italians of the cardinal's train, stared when they heard such a request; and although the German monk had already appeared to them a very strange person, they could not overcome their amazement at the utterance of so bold a speech. Christians, accustomed to ideas of justice, desire that justice should be observed towards others and towards themselves; but those who act habitually in an arbitrary manner, are taken with surprise when asked to proceed according to the regular forms of law.

DE VIO.—"This request, my dearest son, cannot be granted. Thou oughtest to own thine error, to take care of thy words in

future, and not to eat back what thou shalt have vomited, so that we may sleep without trouble or anxiety; in that case, according to the orders and authority of our most holy Father, the pope, I shall settle the whole affair."

LUTHER.—"Be so good then as let me know wherein I may have erred." At this new request the Italian courtiers, who expected to see the poor German beg for mercy on his knees, were struck with still greater amazement. Not one of them would have lowered himself by replying to so impertinent a question. But de Vio, who saw nothing very generous in overwhelming this paltry monk with the sheer weight of his authority, and who trusted, besides, to his learning for an easy victory, condescended to tell Luther what the charges against him were, and even to enter into discussion with him. We must do justice to this general of the Dominicans. We must own that he possessed more equity, a nicer perception of what was fit and proper, and less passion, than men have often displayed since in like affairs. Assuming a tone of condescension, he said,

"Dearest son! here are two propositions which thou hast advanced, and which thou oughtest, first of all, to retract: 1st. The treasure of indulgences is not composed of the merits and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2d. The man who receives the holy sacrament, ought to have faith in the grace that is offered to him."

Both these propositions, in fact, aimed a deadly thrust at the Roman traffic. If the pope had no power to dispose at will of the Saviour's merits; if, in receiving the promissory notes negotiated by the Church's bill brokers, no portion of that infinite righteousness was received, these notes lost all their value, and were to be reckoned as worth no more than so many scraps of paper. It was the same with the sacraments. The indulgences were more or less an extraordinary branch of the commerce of Rome; the sacraments were included in her ordinary trade, and they produced no small amount of revenue. To pretend that faith was requisite in order to their being of any true benefit to the Christian, was to deprive them of all their attraction in the eyes of the people; for faith was beyond what the pope could give; it was not in his power, but came from God alone. So that to assert its necessity was, in fact, to take out of the hands

of Rome, both the speculation and its profits. In attacking these two doctrines, Luther imitated Jesus Christ. From the commencement of his ministry he had been overturning the tables of the money-changers, and expelling from the temple those who bought and sold. He had been saying: *Make not my Father's house a market place.*

"I have no desire in combatting these errors," continued Cajetan, "to appeal to the authority of St. Thomas and the other scholastic doctors; I desire to rest my case on Holy Scripture alone, and to confer with you with all the feelings of a friend."

But hardly had de Vio begun to develop his proofs than he strayed from the rule which he had just declared it to be his wish to follow.¹ Luther's first proposition he combatted with one of the *extravagantes*² of pope Clement, and the second with all sorts of scholastic opinions. The dispute turned first on the constitution of the above pope in favour of the indulgences. Indignant at seeing the authority assigned by the legate to a Roman decretal, Luther exclaimed:—³

"I cannot receive such constitutions as adequate proof on which to establish things of so much consequence. For they wrest the Holy Scripture and never quote it to good purpose."

DE VIO:—"The pope has authority and power over all things."

LUTHER (with vivacity).—"Saving always the claims of Scripture."⁴

DE VIO, (with a sneer).—"Saving Scripture! . . . The pope, don't you know, is above councils; farther, it was but lately that he condemned and punished the council of Basel."

LUTHER.—"The university of Paris has appealed against that."

DE VIO.—"The gentlemen of Paris must pay the penalty for doing so."

The dispute between the cardinal and Luther now turned

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 180.

² The name given to certain constitutions of the popes, collected together and added to the body of the canon law.

³ Under the title of *Extravagantes* are chiefly to be reckoned the decrees of John XXII., but there are included the collections of laws or decrees of other popes, not to be found in other collections, known by the name of *Decretals*.—L. R.

⁴ *Salvâ Scripturâ.*

chiefly on the second point, to wit, on the faith which Luther declared to be necessary in order to the sacraments being of any avail. Following his usual method, Luther quoted many passages of Scripture in favour of the opinion he maintained, but these were received by the legate with bursts of laughter. "It is of the general faith that you speak there," said he. "No!" replied Luther. One of the Italians, master of ceremonies to the legate, losing his patience at Luther's resistance and answers, now burned with eagerness to speak. He would constantly attempt to put in his word, but the legate commanded him to be silent. At length he was obliged to reprimand him so severely that the master of ceremonies left the room in confusion.¹

"With respect to the indulgences," said Luther, addressing the legate, "if it can be proved to me that I am mistaken, I am ready to submit to instruction. It is what may be passed over without a man being on that account a bad Christian. But as for the article of faith, were I to yield in the least, I should deny Jesus Christ. I therefore have neither the power nor the will to yield with respect to that; and by God's grace, never will I yield."

DE VIO, (beginning to be angry).—"Whatever you will or will not do, you must this very day retract that article, otherwise, on account of that single article, I shall reject and condemn thy whole doctrine."

LUTHER.—"I have no other will but that of the Lord. He will do with me what he pleases. But although I had four hundred heads, I would rather lose them all than retract the testimony I have given to the holy faith of Christians."

DE VIO.—"I am not come here to dispute with thee. Retract or prepare thyself for suffering the pains thou hast deserved."²

Luther saw well that it was impossible to settle the matter in a conversation. His opponent sat before him as if he were the pope himself, and pretended that he listened with meekness and submission to all that was said to him, whereas he received Luther's replies, even while founded on Holy Scripture, only by shrugging his shoulders, and expressing every kind of irony and contempt. He considered that he should act most

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 180.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 180, 183, 206, etc.

wisely by replying to the cardinal in writing. This method, he thought, left at least one consolation to the oppressed. Others would judge of the case, and the unfair opponent, who by clamour has kept the field of contest to himself, might take alarm at this.¹

Luther having signified that it was his intention to retire: "Would you like," said the legate to him, "that I should give you a safe-conduct for you to go to Rome?"

Nothing could have been more agreeable to Cajetan than the acceptance of this offer, for he should thus have disembarrassed himself of a task, the difficulties attending which he began to comprehend, and Luther and his heresies would have fallen into hands that knew how to put them in proper order. But the Reformer, being aware of the difficulties with which he was surrounded, even in Augsburg, took good care not to accept a proposal which would have delivered him, bound hand and foot, to the vengeance of his enemies. He rejected it every time that it was renewed by de Vio, which was often. The legate dissembled the pain he felt at Luther's refusal; he wrapt himself up in his dignity, and took leave of the monk with a compassionate smile, beneath which he sought to hide his disappointment, and at the same time with the politeness of a man who hopes for better success at another time.

Hardly had Luther reached the palace court when that prating Italian, the master of ceremonies, whom his master's reprimands had compelled to leave the conference hall, delighted at having it now in his power to speak out of reach of the eye of Cajetan, and burning with eagerness to confound this abominable heretic with his luminous reasonings, ran after him and commenced retailing his sophisms as he walked along with the party. But Luther, who was tired with this foolish personage, replied to him in one of those sarcastic expressions which he could so readily command, and the poor master of ceremonies, in great confusion, gave up the contest, and returned to hide his blushes in the palace of the cardinal.

Luther did not carry away with him any high idea of his adversary. He had heard from him, as he wrote afterwards to

¹ *L. Opp. (L.)* p. 209.

Spalatin, propositions which were quite contrary to theology, and which, in any other person's mouth, would have been reckoned arch-heretical. And yet de Vio was considered as the most learned of the Dominicans. The next after him was Prierias. "One may hence conclude," said Luther, "what may be expected of those who stand in the tenth or hundredth rank."¹

On the other hand, the Wittenberg doctor's noble and decided manner had greatly surprised the cardinal and his court. Instead of a poor monk imploring forgiveness, they found him a free man, a firm Christian, an enlightened doctor, who demanded that proofs should be produced before admitting unjust accusations, and who victoriously defended his doctrines. Everybody in Cajetan's palace declaimed against the pride, obstinacy, and effrontery of this heretic. Luther and de Vio had become mutually acquainted and both prepared for their second interview.

Luther met with a very agreeable surprise on his return to the monastery of the Carmelites. The vicar-general of the order of Augustinians, his friend, his father, Staupitz, had arrived at Augsburg. Having failed in his endeavours to deter Luther from appearing in that city, Staupitz gave his friend a new and touching proof of his attachment, by going there himself, in the hope of being of use to him. This excellent man foresaw that the conferences with the legate must lead to the most serious consequences; his alarms, and the friendship he felt for Luther, were giving him perpetual uneasiness; and after so painful a meeting, it was most refreshing to the doctor to clasp in his arms so precious a friend. He related to him how impossible he had found it to obtain an answer of any weight, how the sole thing exacted from him was a recantation, without any attempt being made to convince him. "It is absolutely necessary," said Staupitz, "to reply to the legate in writing."

From what Staupitz had heard of the first interview, he had no hopes of the success of others. Accordingly, he determined to do what he considered as being from that time an act of necessity; to absolve Luther from his vow of obedience to his

¹ L. Epp. i. 173.

order. By this Staupitz expected to obtain two ends; if, as every thing seemed to presage, Luther were to give way in this affair, he should thus prevent the whole order from being involved in the disgrace of his friend's condemnation; and should the cardinal enjoin him to oblige Luther to silence or to a retraction, he should have an excuse for not doing so.¹ The ceremony took place according to the accustomed rules. Luther felt all that from that time forth he might expect. His soul was keenly affected at witnessing the loosing of those ties which he had formed in the enthusiasm of his youth. The order which he had chosen now rejects him. His natural protectors withdraw. Already he is become a stranger to his brethren. But, sad at heart as he felt, he recovered all his joyful feelings by turning his view to the promises of that faithful God who has said: "I will never leave thee; I will never forsake thee."

The emperor's councillors having informed the legate through the bishop of Trent, that Luther was furnished with an imperial safe-conduct, and having caused it to be notified at the same time that he must undertake nothing against the doctor. de Vio lost his temper, and tartly replied in these very Roman words: "Very well; but I shall do what the pope commands."² We know what the pope commanded.

VII. On the day following,³ preparations were made on both sides for the second interview, and it seemed likely to prove decisive. Luther's friends, having resolved to accompany him to the legate's palace, repaired to the monastery of the Carmelites. The dean of Trent, Peutingier, both councillors of the emperor, and Staupitz, successively arrived, shortly after which the doctor had the heartfelt satisfaction of seeing these joined by Philip of Feilitzsch, a knight, and doctor Ruhel, councillors of the elector, who had received their master's orders to be present at the conferences, and to protect Luther's liberty. They had arrived in Augsburg the preceding evening and were to stand by him, says Mathesius, as the knight of Schlum at Constance stood by John Huss. The doctor took a notary also with him, and, accompanied by all his friends, repaired to the legate's palace.

¹ Darinn ihn Dr. Staupitz von dem Kloster-Gehorsam absolvirt. (Math. 15.)

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 201.

³ Wednesday, 12th of October.

At this moment Staupitz went up to him; he comprehended the whole situation of Luther; he knew that if his eye were not fixed on the Lord, who is the refuge of his people, he must give way: "My dear brother," he gravely said to him, "constantly call to mind that you began these things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."¹ Thus did God surround his humble servant with consolations and encouragements.

On arriving at the cardinal's residence Luther found a new adversary there, in the prior of the Augsburg Dominicans, who was seated by the side of his chief. Agreeably to the resolution he had formed, Luther brought his reply written out, and as soon as the customary greetings were over, read the following declaration with a strong voice:

"I declare that I honour the holy Roman Church and will continue to honour her. I have sought the truth in public disputations, and all that I have said I regard, even to this hour, as just, true, and Christian. Nevertheless I am but a man and may be mistaken. Accordingly, I am disposed to submit to instruction and correction in those things in which I may have erred. I declare that I am ready to reply by word of mouth, or by writing, to all the objections, and all the reproaches, which the lord legate may bring against me. I declare myself ready to submit my theses to the four universities of Basel, Fribourg in Brisgau, Louvain, and Paris, and to retract what they shall find erroneous. In a word, I am ready to comply with all that can be asked from me as a Christian. But I solemnly protest against the course which has been sought to be given to this affair, and against the strange pretension of obliging me to retract without having refuted me."^{2 3}

Nothing, doubtless, could be more fair than these proposals on the part of Luther, and they must have very much embarrassed a judge to whom the judgment he was to pronounce had been prescribed before hand. The legate, who had never expected such a protest, strove to conceal his vexation by affecting to

¹ Seckend., p. 137.

² Löschner, 2, 463. L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 181, 209.

³ From this it is very manifest that Luther's aim throughout was not to separate from the Romish Church, or to establish a new sect, but only to direct attention to the abuses prevailing in that Church, being perfectly willing, moreover, to submit himself to reasonable instruction in that respect.—L. R.

laugh, and by preserving all the outward shows of gentleness. "This protest," said he to Luther with a smile, "is unnecessary; I have no wish to dispute with you, either in public or in private, but I propose to settle the affair with kindness and as a father." The whole policy of the cardinal lay in setting aside the severe forms of justice which protect the accused, and in treating the affair as a mere matter of administration between a superior and his inferior: a very convenient course for him, in as much as it opened up the widest scope for arbitrary treatment.

Continuing an air of the utmost affection: "My dear friend," said de Vio, "relinquish, I pray you, so useless a purpose; return as soon as possible into yourself, acknowledge the truth, and I am ready to reconcile you with the Church and with the sovereign bishop. . . . Retract, my friend, retract; such is the will of the pope. Whatever you may or may not wish to do, it matters little! It will be difficult for you to kick against the pricks." . . .

Luther, who saw himself treated as if he already were a rebellious child and rejected by the Church, exclaimed: "I cannot retract, but I offer myself for the purpose of replying, and that by writing. We had enough of fencing yesterday."¹

This expression made de Vio angry, for it reminded him that he had not acted with sufficient prudence; but he recovered himself and said with a smile: "Fencing! my dear son; I have not fenced with thee: nor do I any more wish to fence with thee now; but I am ready, from complaisance to the most serene elector Frederick, to hear thee and to exhort thee as a friend and father."

Luther did not comprehend the legate's being so very much scandalised at the expression he had employed; "for," said he, "had I not wished to speak politely, I might have said, not fence it out, but dispute and quarrel; for that truly is what we did yesterday."

Meanwhile, de Vio, feeling that in presence of the respectable witnesses who attended the conference, it was proper that he should at least appear to be desirous to convince Luther, returned

¹ Digladiatum. (L. Epp. i. p. 181.)

to the two propositions which he had pointed out to him as fundamental errors, well resolved to allow the reformer to speak as little as possible. Availing himself of his Italian volubility, he heaped objections upon objections without waiting for a reply. Now he jests, now he growls; he declaims with the utmost vehemence, he mixes things together in the oddest manner; he quotes St. Thomas, (Acquinas,) and Aristotle; he exclaims against all who do not think as he does; he apostrophises Luther. The latter about ten times over renews his endeavours to speak; but the legate as often interrupts him, and overwhelms him with threats. Retractation! retractation! such is his sole demand. He thunders, he spurns at all resistance as if he were a king, he will suffer none to speak but himself.¹ Staupitz undertakes to stop the legate. "Be so good," says he, "as allow Dr. Martin time to reply to you." But the legate begins his discourse anew; quotes the extravagantes and the opinions of St. Thomas; shows himself resolved to occupy the whole interview with his peroration. If he cannot convince and dares not strike, he does his best at least to confound.

Luther and Staupitz clearly saw that they must renounce all hope not only of enlightening de Vio by a discussion, but farther, of making a profession of faith to any good purpose. Accordingly, Luther reverted to the request he had made at the commencement of the sitting, and which the cardinal had then eluded. Since it was not permitted him to speak, he craved that at least he might be allowed to write out, and transmit a written reply to the legate. Staupitz supported him in this, several of the bye-standers joined their entreaties to his, and Cajetan, notwithstanding his extreme repugnance to written documents, remembering that writings are permanent things, at last consented. The parties now separated. The hope entertained of terminating the affair in this conference, was adjourned; it was necessary to wait for the result of the next interview.

The permission granted to Luther by the general of the Dominicans to take time for reply, and that by writing, on the two accusations distinctly articulated against him touching the indulgences and faith, was no more than justice required, and yet we

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 181, 209. Decies fere cœpi ut loquerer, toties rursus tonabat et solus regnabat.

must give de Vio credit for moderation and impartiality in conceding it.

Luther came away, glad at having obtained his request. Both in going to Cajetan and on his way back, he was an object of public attention. All enlightened persons interested themselves in his affair, as if they had been themselves to be tried. People felt that it was the cause of the gospel, of righteousness and of liberty, which was now brought to the bar at Augsburg. The rabble alone were on the side of Cajetan, and gave the Reformer some significant proofs of this, for the latter was aware of them.¹

It became daily more evident that the legate would hear nothing from Luther but these words, "I retract," and Luther was determined not to pronounce them. What was to be the result of so unequal a struggle? Could it be imagined that the whole power of Rome, matched against a single man, could fail to crush him at last? Luther was aware of this; he felt the weight of that terrible hand beneath which he had come to place himself; he lost hope of ever returning to Wittenberg, of again beholding his dear Philip, of being again surrounded by those generous youths in whose hearts he so much delighted to sow the seeds of life. He saw excommunication suspended over him, and he had no doubt that it would descend upon him soon.² The prospect of these things afflicted his soul, but never overwhelmed it. His trust in God remained unshaken. God might break the instrument which up to that hour he had been pleased to employ; but he would maintain the truth. Whatever may happen, Luther was called upon to defend it to the last. He therefore proceeded to prepare the protest which he wished to lay before the legate. It appears that to this he devoted a part of the 13th of the month.

VIII. On Friday, October 14th, Luther went again to the legate's, accompanied by the elector's counsellors. The Italians, as before, pressed about him, and attended the conference in great numbers. Luther stepped forward and presented his protest, a document which the cardinal's people beheld with amazement,

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 186.

² Ibid. 185.

so audacious did it seem in their eyes. The Wittenberg doctor told his mind to their master in it as follows:¹

“You attack me on two points. First, you meet me with the constitution of pope Clement VI., in which, it seems, it is said that the treasure of the indulgences consists of the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of his saints, which in my theses I deny.

“Panormitanus,” (by this name Luther referred to Ives, author of the famous collection of ecclesiastical law intituled *Panormia*, and bishop of Chartres, towards the close of the eleventh century.)² “Panormitanus declares in his first book, that as respects the holy faith, not only a general council, but further, each of the faithful, is above the pope, if he can appeal to declarations of Scripture and to reasons better than those of the pope.³ The voice of our Lord is far above all the voices of men, whatever be the names they bear.

“What causes me most uneasiness and most occupies my thoughts, is that that constitution contains doctrines which are quite opposed to the truth. It declares that the merit of the saints is a treasure, whereas the whole of Scripture testifies that God recompenses far more richly than we have deserved. The prophet cries out: *Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight no flesh living shall be justified!*⁴ Woe to the men, however honourable and praiseworthy their lives may be, says St. Augustine, if on those lives a judgment is to be pronounced from which mercy is excluded!”⁵

“Thus the saints are not saved by their merits but only by the mercy of God, as I have declared. This I maintain, and by this I will abide. The words of Scripture which declare that the saints have not a sufficiency of merits, ought to rank higher than the words of men who affirm that they have an overplus of merits. For the pope is not above, but below the Word of God.”

Luther did not confine himself to this: he shows that if the

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 187.

² A correspondent says, not Ives, but Nicolas Tudeschi, archbishop of Palermo, hence called Panormitanus, who wrote on the Canon law. See Dupin, *Ecll. Hist. Cent. xv.* p. 87. Tr.

³ . . . Ostendit in materiâ fidei, non modo generale concilium esse super papam, sed etiam quemlibet fidelium, si melioribus nitatur auctoritate et ratione quam papa. (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 209.)

⁴ Psalm cxliii. ver. 2.

⁵ Confess. ix.

indulgences cannot be the merits of the saints, no more can they be Christ's merits. He demonstrates that the indulgences are barren and fruitless, since their only effect is to exempt men from the performance of good works, such as prayers and alms. "No," he exclaims, "Christ's merits are not a treasure of indulgences exempting men from good, but a treasure of life-giving grace. Christ's merits are applied to the believer without indulgences, without keys, by the Holy Ghost alone, and not by the pope. If any one entertain views better founded than mine," he adds in concluding what he says on this first point, "let him declare them, and then I will retract."

"I have stated," says he, on coming to the second article, "that no man can be justified before God unless by faith, so that man must believe with an entire assurance that he has obtained grace. To doubt this grace, is to reject it. The faith of the righteous man is his righteousness and his life."¹

Luther proves this proposition by a multitude of Scriptural declarations. "Be so good then as intercede for me with our most holy lord pope Leo X.," he adds, "in order that he may no longer treat me with such disfavour. . . . My soul seeks for the light of truth. I am not so proud, not so covetous of vain glory, as to be ashamed of retracting, if I have taught things that are false. My greatest joy would be to see the triumph of those things that are according to God. Only let me not be compelled to do anything whatsoever against the cry of my conscience."²

The legate took the declaration from Luther's hands, and after running over it, coldly said to him: "Thou hast here indulged in useless verbiage; thou hast written many vain words; thou hast foolishly replied to the two articles, and thou hast blackened thy paper with a number of passages of Scripture which have nothing to do with the subject." Saying which, de Vio with a disdainful air, tosses away Luther's protest, as if he made no

¹ *Justitia justi et vita ejus, est fides ejus.* (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 211.)

² These and the like declarations of Luther quite confound all the slanders and accusations against Luther as stubborn, proud, and obstinate. What a beautiful exhibition we have here of his heartfelt love of the truth and his sincere humility! Or shall we choose to regard all these declarations as pure dissimulation? He that can do this must himself be a hypocrite, or from being beset with prejudices, is incapable of distinguishing between the sincere language of the heart and that of dissemblers.—L. R.

account of it, and resuming the same tone which had succeeded so well in the last interview, he begins to roar with all his might, that Luther ought to retract. But Luther is not to be shaken. "Brother! brother!" then exclaims de Vio in Italian, "the last time you were very good, but to-day you are altogether wicked." The cardinal then begins a long discourse taken from the writings of St. Thomas; again with his utmost endeavours he extols the constitution of Clement VI., he persists in maintaining that by that constitution the very merits of Jesus Christ are portioned out among believers through the medium of the indulgences. He believes that he has silenced Luther, who at times attempts to speak, but de Vio growls and thunders on without intermission, and as on the preceding evening, would fain engross the field of battle to himself.

This procedure might have had so much success for once; but Luther was not the man to suffer it to be so a second time. His indignation bursts forth at last, and now it was his turn to strike the onlookers with amazement, just as they supposed him to be overcome by the prelate's volubility. He raises his sonorous voice, he seizes the cardinal's favourite objection and makes him pay dear for the rashness he had shown in entering into controversy with him. "Retract! retract!" repeated de Vio, showing him the pope's constitution. "Very well!" said Luther, "if it can be proved by that constitution that the treasure of indulgences is the merit itself of Jesus Christ, I consent to retract, according to your eminence's will and good pleasure." . . .

The Italians, who looked for nothing like this, stared at these words, and could not repress their delight at seeing their adversary at length taken in the net. As for the cardinal, he was like one beside himself; he laughed outright, still with a laugh that was mingled with indignation and anger; he darts at the book containing the famous constitution; he seeks it out, lays his finger on it, and exulting in the victory of which he thought himself sure, he reads it aloud, gasping with excitement.¹ The Italians now triumph; the elector's counsellors are disquieted and embarrassed; Luther hears his opponent read. At length on the cardinal coming to those words: "The Lord Jesus Christ

¹ Legit fervens et anhelans. (L. Epp. i. p. 145.)

has acquired this treasure by his sufferings," Luther stops him; "Most worthy father," says he, "be so good as carefully weigh and consider that expression: *He has acquired*.¹ Christ has acquired a treasure by his merits; the merits then are not the treasure; for to speak with the philosophers, the cause and its consequence are two different things. Christ's merits have acquired for the pope the power of giving such and such indulgences to the people; but they are not the very merits of the Saviour which the pontiff's hand distributes. Thus, then, my conclusion is *a sound one*, and that constitution to which you appeal with so much ado, witnesses with me to the truth that I proclaim."

De Vio still holds the book in his hands; his eyes are still fixed on the fatal passage; he has nothing to reply. There he is, taken in the very snare he had laid for another, and there Luther holds him with his potent hand, to the unutterable astonishment of the Italians who encircled him. Fain would the legate evade this difficulty; but he cannot: he had long ago abandoned both the testimonies of the Scriptures and those of the fathers; he had taken refuge in this *extravagant* of Clement VI., and there he is caught. Nevertheless he is too good a dissembler to allow his embarrassment to be observed. Wishing to hide his confusion, the prince of the Church suddenly changes the subject, and throws himself with great vehemence on other points, but this clever manœuvre is detected by Luther, who does not allow him to escape, but tightens and binds in on all sides the net he has thrown around the cardinal, so that he can nowhere get out. "Most reverend father," says he, with an irony that bore every appearance of respect, "your reverence must not, however, suppose that we, poor Germans, know nothing of grammar; to be a treasure, and to acquire a treasure, are two very different things."

"Retract!" cries de Vio, "retract! or else I will send you to Rome, there to be tried by judges appointed to take cognisance of your cause. I excommunicate thee—thee and all who now are, or yet shall be, thine abettors, and I cast them out of the Church. Full power to this effect has been bestowed on me, by

¹ *Acquisivit.* (L. Epp. i. p. 145.)

the holy apostolic see.¹ Thinkest thou that thy protectors will prevent me? Dost thou imagine that the pope cares about Germany? Why, the pope's little finger is stronger than all the German princes put together."^{2 3}

"Deign," replies Luther, "to send to pope Leo X., with my humblest prayers, the answer I have laid before thee in writing."

At these words, the legate, not a little pleased to have some moments' respite, wraps himself anew in the consciousness of his dignity, and says to Luther in a haughty and angry tone:

"Retract, or return no more."⁴

These words struck Luther, who saw that this time a verbal reply would be out of place. He bowed accordingly and withdrew, followed by the elector's counsellors. The cardinal and his Italians, left by themselves, looked at each other in amazement at this unexpected result of the debate.

Luther and de Vio never again met. But the Reformer left too deep an impression on the legate ever to be entirely effaced. What the former had said upon faith, and what de Vio read afterwards in later writings of the Wittenberg doctor, greatly modified the cardinal's views, so that the divines of Rome saw with surprise and displeasure what he stated on the subject of justification, in his commentary on the epistle to the Romans. The Reformer yielded nothing—retracted nothing; but its judge, he who had incessantly exclaimed, Retract! changed his views and indirectly retracted his errors; and thus was the Reformer's unflinching steadfastness rewarded.⁵

Luther returned to the monastery where he had been hospitably received. He had maintained his steadfastness; he had borne testimony to the truth; he had acted the part assigned to him: God would do the rest. His heart was replenished with peace and joy.

IX. Meanwhile, the news that reached him were not such as to re-assure his spirits, for it was currently reported in the city

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 197.

² L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1331.

³ What a piece of arrogance, and all this without any proof that the pope derives his powers from God! What would be the case were he but once to recover his former influence? How necessary to be ever on our guard with respect to him!—L. R.

⁴ *Revoca aut non revertere.* (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 202.)

⁵ And thus shall it always be with every one that knows how to stand firmly for the truth in his day.—L. R.

that unless he chose to retract, he must be apprehended and thrown into prison. Nay, it was even alleged that the vicar-general of the order, Staupitz himself, must have given his consent to such a step.¹ Luther could not believe what people said of his friend. No! Staupitz will not betray him! As for the cardinal's designs, to judge of them according to his own words, they could not easily be doubted. Nevertheless he had no wish to fly at the sight of danger; life, like the truth itself, was in powerful hands, and notwithstanding the jeopardy of his situation, he resolved not to leave Augsburg.

The legate soon repented of his violence, and perceiving that he had wandered from his proper sphere, he wished to make an effort to return to it. Hardly had Staupitz finished dinner, (the interview had taken place in the morning, and the dinner hour was at noon,) when a message arrived from the cardinal, inviting him to come to him. Staupitz went, accompanied by Wenceslas Link.² The vicar-general found the legate alone with Serra-Longa; but the latter immediately went up to Staupitz, and addressed him in the most winning expressions. "Now, do endeavour," said he to him, "to persuade this monk of yours, and to engage him to make a retractation. Truly I am satisfied with him in other respects and he has not a better friend than myself."³

STAUPITZ. "I have done so already, and will yet advise him to submit with all humility to the Church."

DE VIO.—"You must answer the arguments he adduces from Holy Scripture."

STAUPITZ.—"I must confess to you, my lord, that that is beyond my ability; for doctor Martin is my superior, both in intellect and in acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures."

The cardinal smiled, doubtless, at this frankness on the part of the vicar-general. He knew himself, besides, what caution had to be observed with respect to the difficulty of convincing Luther. He went on to say to Staupitz and Link:

"Are you rightly aware that as partizans of an heretical doctrine, you are yourselves exposed to Church penalties?"

STAUPITZ.—"Condescend to resume the conference with

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii p. 210.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 204.

³ Ibid. p. 185.

Luther; let there be a public disputation on the controverted points."

De Vio, terrified at the very thought of this,

"I am unwilling to dispute any longer with that brute. For it has deep eyes and wonderful speculations in its head." ¹

Staupitz at length obtained a promise from the cardinal that he would transmit to Luther, in writing, what he was expected to retract.

The vicar-general returned to Luther. Shaken by the cardinal's representations, he attempted to bring him to some accommodation. "Refute then," said Luther, "the declarations of Scripture which I have produced." "That is beyond my power," said Staupitz.—"Very well," says Luther, "it is against my conscience to retract, as long as no one shall be able to explain to me these passages of Scripture." "How!" he continued, "the cardinal professes according to what he assures you, that he would fain arrange the matter amicably, without putting me either to discredit or disadvantage. Ah! these are Roman words which, in good German, mean that it will prove my everlasting disgrace and ruin. What else can he expect who from fear of man, and against the cry of his own conscience, denies the truth?" ²

Staupitz did not insist; he only gave Luther to know that the cardinal had consented to send him, in writing, the points which he desired he should retract. Next, no doubt, he apprised him of the resolution he had taken to leave Augsburg, where he no longer had any thing to do. Luther communicated to him a design he had formed for comforting and fortifying their souls. Staupitz then left him with a promise to return, and for a short time they were separated.

On being left alone in his cell, Luther turned his thoughts to friends who were dear to his heart, transporting himself in fancy to Weimar and to Wittemberg. He wished to inform the elector of what was taking place, and fearing that there might be some indiscretion in addressing himself directly to the prince, he wrote to Spalatin, requesting the chaplain to make his master

¹ Ego nolo amplius cum hac bestiâ disputare. Habet enim profundos oculos et mirabiles speculationes in capite suo. (Myconius, p. 33.)

² *I. Op. (L.)* xvii. p. 210.

acquainted with the position of affairs. He related to him all that had passed, down to the promise made him by the legate to give him the controverted points in writing, and wound up by saying: "Thus stands the fact; but I have neither hope nor confidence in the legate. I have no wish to retract a single syllable. I shall publish the reply that I have sent him, so that if he proceed to violence, he may be disgraced in the eyes of all Christendom."¹

The doctor next availed himself of some few remaining moments to send news to his friends at Wittemberg.

"Peace and felicity," he wrote to Dr. Carlstadt. "Take these few words as if they were a long letter; for time and events are urgent with me. At another time I shall write to you and others, at greater length. My affair has now occupied three days, and matters are come to such a pass, that I no longer indulge the hope of seeing you again, and have nothing but excommunication to look for. The legate is absolutely opposed to my disputing either in public or in private. He tells me he has no wish to act towards me as a judge, but as a father; yet he desires to hear nothing from me except these words: 'I retract, and own that I have been mistaken.' And, as for me, I have no desire to say them.

"The dangers attending my case are so much the greater, in that it has persons for judges who are not only implacable enemies, but further, who are quite incapable of comprehending it. Meanwhile, the Lord God lives and reigns: to his safe-keeping I commend myself, and I doubt not that in answer to the prayers of some godly souls, he will send me help: I think I can feel that I am prayed for.

"Either I shall return to you unscathed; or become the victim of excommunication, and seek an asylum elsewhere.

"Be this as it may, do you bear yourself valiantly, be steadfast, and exalt Christ fearlessly and joyfully.

"The cardinal calls me always his dear son. I know how far I ought to believe this. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that I should be to him the pleasantest and the dearest man on earth, would I but pronounce that single word *Revoco*, that is to say,

¹ L. Epp. i. 149.

I retract. But I will not make myself a heretic by retracting the faith which made me a Christian. Better to be exiled, cursed, burnt, put to death. . . .

"Fare you well, my dear doctor, and show this letter to our theologians, to Amsdorff, to Philip, to Otten and others, that you may pray for me and for yourselves also; for it is your affair that is treated here. It is the cause of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and of the grace of God." ¹

Sweet thought which has ever given consolation and peace to those who have borne witness to Jesus Christ, to his divinity, and to his grace, though the world may rain down on them from all parts its sentences of condemnation, its verdicts of exclusion, and its disfavour; "Our cause is that of faith in the Lord!" And how much sweetness in the conviction expressed by the Reformer: "I feel that people are praying for me!" The Reformation was the work of prayer and of godliness. The struggle between Luther and de Vio was that of the religious element which was re-appearing, full of life, with the expiring remains of the middle-age dialectics.

Thus was Luther enjoying communion with his absent friends when Staupitz returned, and with him came Dr. Ruhel and the chevalier de Feilitzsch, both envoys from the elector, and who had been taking leave of the cardinal. With these certain other friends of the Gospel had joined themselves. Perceiving this generous band assembled, and on the eve of separating, and thinking that possibly he was about to part with them for ever, Luther proposed that they should unite in celebrating the Lord's supper. They agreed to this proposal, and accordingly, that little flock of believers enjoyed the communion of the body and of the blood of Jesus Christ. What must have been the feelings of those friends of the Reformer when they reflected that this possibly might be his last opportunity of celebrating the eucharist. What delight and what love must have glowed in Luther's breast, on seeing himself graciously received by his master, at the moment that men were rejecting him! How solemn must the scene have been! How holy that evening entertainment! ²

¹ I. Epp. i. 159.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 178.

Luther waited next day¹ for the articles that were to have been sent him. Not receiving these, he begged his friend, doctor Wenceslas Link, to wait upon the cardinal, who gave him a most affable reception, and assured him of his desire to act the part of a friend. "I no more," said he, "consider Dr. Martin Luther as an heretic. I don't wish this time to excommunicate him, at least should no orders to the contrary come from Rome. I have sent his answer to the pope by express." Then, in proof of his good feeling, he added: "If the doctor would but retract what relates to the indulgences, the affair would soon be finished; for as regards faith in the sacraments, it is an article which each may interpret and understand in his own manner." Spalatin, who reports these words, adds this sarcastic but just remark: "Hence it is very manifest that money is more an object with Rome than the holy faith and the salvation of souls."²

Link returned to Luther, found Staupitz with him, and related to them the particulars of his visit. On his mentioning the legate's unexpected concession: "It would have been worth the trouble," said Staupitz, "for Dr. Wenceslas to have had a notary and witnesses with him, to put that down in writing; for were it known, it would do great prejudice to the Romans."

Meanwhile, the greater the mildness of expression adopted by the prelate, the less was he trusted by the honest Germans. Many of the worthy men to whom Luther was recommended, held a consultation. "The legate," they said, "is brewing some mischief by that courier whom he talks of, and it is much to be feared that you all may be seized and thrown into prison."

Staupitz and Wenceslas resolved accordingly to leave the town: they embraced Luther, who persisted in remaining in Augsburg, and hurriedly set off by two different roads to Nuremberg, not without feeling much uneasiness about what might be awaiting the courageous witness whom they were leaving behind.

The Lord's day passed quietly enough. Luther waited in vain for a message from the legate: the latter gave no directions for any thing being said to him. At last he resolved to write to him. Staupitz and Link before their departure had

¹ Saturday October 15th.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 182.

begged him to show the cardinal all possible condescension. Luther had not yet had sufficient experience of Rome and her envoys; this was his first trial of them. If his condescension did not succeed, he might regard himself as warned. Now at least he ought to make the attempt. As far as related to himself, not a day passed without self-condemnation, and without lamenting the ease with which he suffered himself to be hurried into such strong expressions as exceeded the bounds of propriety: and why should he not admit to the cardinal what he daily confessed to God? Luther, moreover, had a susceptible and unsuspecting heart; accordingly he took up his pen, and in a fit of respectful benevolence, wrote to the cardinal as follows:¹

“Most worthy father in God, I come once more, not by word of mouth but in writing, to beseech your fatherly goodness to listen to me favourably. The reverend doctor Staupitz, my very dear father in Christ, has called on me to humble myself, to renounce my own sentiments, and to submit my opinions to the judgment of godly and impartial men. He has, also, commended your fatherly goodness, and has thoroughly convinced me of the favourable sentiments with which you are animated with respect to me. This news has greatly delighted me.

“Now, then, most worthy father, I confess, as I have already done, that I have not, as has been said, shown sufficient modesty, sufficient meekness, or sufficient respect for the name of the sovereign pontiff; and albeit I have been greatly provoked, I am sensible that it had been better for me to have treated the matter with more humility, meekness, and reverence, and not to *have answered a fool according to his folly, lest I should be like unto him*, (Proverbs xxvi. 4.)

“This greatly distresses me, and I beg to be forgiven for it. I wish to make it known to the people from the pulpit, as, I may add, I have often done already. I desire by God’s grace to set about speaking in a different manner. Nay more; I am ready to promise, without its being asked of me, not to say a single word more on the subject of the indulgences, if this affair be arranged. But, in like manner, let those who have led me to begin, be compelled, on their side, to be more moderate for the future in what they say or else to hold their peace.

¹ The letter is dated October 17th.

"As for what regards the truth of my doctrine, the authority of St. Thomas and the other doctors is not sufficient for me. It is necessary that I should hear, if I am worthy of it, the voice of the bride, that is, the Church. For it is certain that she hears the voice of the bridegroom, who is Christ.

"I pray, therefore, in all humility and submission, of your fatherly love, to refer this whole matter, which up to this hour is so doubtful, to our most holy lord Leo X., in order that the Church may decide, pronounce, and ordain, and so that one may retract with a good conscience or believe with sincerity."¹ ²

One farther reflection is suggested on reading this letter. It will be seen that Luther did not act under the influence of any preconceived system, but solely from the convictions that were successively impressed on his mind and heart. So far was he from having adopted any precise system, or any calculated opposition, that sometimes, without being aware of it, he was inconsistent with himself. Old convictions had not quite ceased to control his understanding, even although opposite ones had already take their place. And yet it is in these marks of sincerity and of truth, that some have been at pains to seek for weapons wherewith to attack the Reformation; the history of its variations has been written because it followed this inevitable law of progression, to which, in regard to all things, the human mind must submit; it is in the very moral traits that demonstrate its sincerity, and which consequently reflect honour on that sincerity, that one of the most eminent Christian geniuses has found his most powerful objections!³ . . . How inconceivable are the aberrations of the human mind!⁴

¹ L. Opp. (L.) 190.

² How remarkably the sincerity of Luther appears in this letter. He will by no means dissemble his faults. He is not too proud meekly to confess them and ask forgiveness; still he does this in such a manner that the truth does not suffer thereby, and that his firm conviction of it is distinctly brought out. With what justice can such a man be blamed in regard to the matter which he had taken in hand, because his over-powering love of the truth sometimes made his zeal outstrip the bounds of moderation? Well would it be, were all to know and confess their imperfections as Luther did, even when engaged in maintaining some good and righteous cause.—L. R.

³ Bossuet's History of the Variations. (Book i. p. 25, etc.)

⁴ Yet still more inconceivable is it that after these alleged inconsistencies have been so often and so well cleared up, people should nevertheless repeat them *ad nauseam*, and as in the case of the *Gospel Weathercock* dress them up anew for the taste of an ignorant multitude which has no means of becoming directly acquainted with the writings of the great Reformer, or with other

Luther received no answer to his letter. Cajetan and his courtiers, after having made such a violent commotion, all at once became perfectly still. What could be the reason for this? Might it not be the calm that precedes a storm? Some are of Pallavicini's opinion: "The cardinal," he remarks, "waited until the haughty monk, who was like a pair of inflated bellows, should gradually lose the wind with which he was puffed up, and become quite a humble man."¹ Others, who thought themselves better acquainted with the ways of Rome, felt assured that the legate wished to seize Luther, but that not daring himself to come to such extremities in the face of the imperial safe-conduct, he was waiting for an answer from Rome. A third party could not think that the cardinal meant to wait so long. "The emperor Maximilian," said they, and this might probably be the truth, "will no more scruple to surrender Luther to the judgment of the Church, notwithstanding the safe-conduct, than Sigismond scrupled to deliver John Huss to the council of Constance. The legate is perhaps at this instant negotiating with the emperor. Maximilian's sanction may at any moment arrive. In proportion to the opposition to the pope which he has hitherto shown, will he now, and up to the time that the imperial crown is placed on the head of his grandson, appear to flatter him. There is not a moment to be lost. "Prepare," said the generous men who now surrounded Luther, "prepare an appeal to the pope, and quit Augsburg without delay."

Luther, whose presence in that city had now for four days been useless, and who by remaining after the departure of the Saxon counsellors sent by the Elector to watch over his safety, had sufficiently shown that he feared nothing, and was ready to answer on every point, yielded at length to the wishes of his friends. But he wanted first to inform de Vio of his design, and did so by a letter written in a tone of greater firmness than the

works composed in his defence, so as to become better informed on the subject. He who knows better, yet persists in acting thus, ought to feel ashamed of such a dishonourable method of misrepresenting the truth, and of again giving the least appearance of credit to what has long since been acknowledged to be a bad attempt. May this History of the Reformation, falling into the hands of the candid Roman Catholic, notwithstanding prohibitions to the contrary, serve to open his eyes to the slanders that have been propagated against the Reformers.—L. R.

¹ Ut follis ille ventosâ elatione distentus. . . . (p. 40.)

former. It would appear that as Luther saw that all his advances were vain, he began to hold up his head in the conviction he felt of the righteousness of his cause, and of the injustice of his enemies.

“Most worthy father in God,” he writes to de Vio, “your fatherly goodness has seen, yes—has seen, I say, and has sufficiently acknowledged my obedience. I have undertaken so distant a journey, amid great perils, in much bodily weakness and in spite of my extreme poverty; in obedience to orders from our most holy lord Leo X.; I have personally appeared before your Eminence; finally, I have thrown myself at the feet of His Holiness, and I now wait on his good pleasure, being ready to acknowledge his sentence as just, whether he condemn me or justify me. I have the consciousness, therefore, of having left nothing undone of whatever could be expected from me, as an obedient son of the Church.

“Consequently, I think it my duty no longer to remain here to no purpose, and besides, this indeed is out of my power. I am in want of means, and your fatherly goodness told me, in a decided tone, no more to appear before you, if I would not retract.

“Thus, then, I leave the place in the name of the Lord, desiring to look about me for some spot to which I may retire and live in peace. Sundry personages of more importance than I am, have advised me to appeal from your fatherly goodness, and even from our most holy lord Leo X., now misinformed, to the same Leo when better informed. Well aware as I am that such an appeal would be much more agreeable to our most serene Elector than a retraction, nevertheless, had I wished to consult myself only, I should never have made it. . . . I have not committed any fault, I ought therefore to fear nothing.”

After writing this letter, which was not transmitted to the legate till after Luther's departure, the latter made himself ready to leave Augsburg. God had preserved him up to that hour, and his heart praised the Lord for it; but he would have done wrong to tempt God. He embraced his friends Peutingier, Langemantel, the Adelmans, Auerbach, and the prior of the Carmelites who had entertained him with so much Christian hospitality. On Wednesday before day-break, he was up and

ready to set out. His friends had recommended him to take many precautions, lest, perceiving his design, his enemies should thwart it, and these counsels of theirs he followed as far as he could. A poney left for him by Staupitz, was brought to the convent gate. Again he bade adieu to his brethren, then mounted and set off, without a bridle, boots, spurs, or arms. The city magistrate had appointed a town officer who knew the road perfectly, to accompany him on horseback. This attendant conducted him under shade of night through the silent streets of Augsburg. They directed their course to a wicket gate in the city wall. One of the counsellors, Langemantel, had given orders for its being opened. He is still in the power of the legate, the hand of Rome may yet lay hold of him. Doubtless, were the Italians aware that their prey was escaping from them, they would raise a howl of fury. Who knows but that the adversary of Rome may yet be seized and thrown into a dungeon? . . . At length Luther and his guide reach the wicket, pass through, are out of Augsburg, and forthwith put their horses to the gallop and gain some distance with the utmost dispatch.

Luther at his departure had left his appeal to the pope in the hands of the prior of Pomesaw, his friends not being of opinion that it should be sent to the legate. The prior had instructions to post it up, two or three days after the doctor's departure, at the cathedral door, in presence of a notary and witnesses; this he succeeded in doing.

In that document Luther declares that he appeals from the most holy father the pope, ill informed, to the most holy lord and father in Christ, Leo X. of that name, by the grace of God, better informed.¹ This address had been drawn up in the requisite style and forms, in the office of the imperial notary, Gall of Herbrachtingen, in presence of two Augustinian monks, Bartholomew Utzmair, and Wenzel Steinbies. It was dated 16th October.

On the cardinal being informed of the departure of Luther, he was confounded: nay, as he says himself in a letter to the Elector, he was frightened and terrified. And, in fact, he had wherewithal to be angry, for by putting an end so abruptly to

¹ Melius informandum (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 219.)

all the negotiations, this result balked the hopes with which his pride had so long been flattered. He had coveted the honour of healing the wounds of the Church, and of re-establishing the tottering influence of the pope in Germany; and not only had the heretic escaped without punishment, but without his having even succeeded in humbling him. The conference had served only to place in a stronger light, on the one hand, the simplicity, honesty, and firmness of Luther, and, on the other, the haughty and unreasonable conduct of the pope and his ambassador. Since Rome had gained nothing by it, she could not but have lost; her authority having failed to be strengthened, must have sustained a fresh decline. What will people say at the Vatican? What messages may be expected from Rome? The difficulties of his position will be forgotten, and the luckless issue of the affair will be set down to his want of capacity. Serra-Longa and the Italians grew furious at seeing themselves, with all their acuteness, outwitted by a German monk. De Vio could hardly conceal his vexation. Such an affront called for vengeance, and we shall soon see him breathe out all his wrath in the letter he addressed to the Elector.

X. Luther and his guide continued to recede from Augsburg, he urging his horse to the utmost speed that the poor animal's strength would allow. He called to mind the real or supposed flight of John Huss, the manner of his being overtaken, and the assertion of his enemies that as by that flight Huss had annulled the emperor's safe-conduct, they were authorized to commit him to the flames.¹ Meanwhile these disquietudes could make but a slight impression on Luther's feelings. Escaped from the city in which he had spent ten days in the terrible hand of that Rome which had already crushed so many thousands of witnesses to the truth, and had made so much blood to flow around her, now that he is free, now that he breathes the pure country air, and traverses the fields and villages, now that he sees himself so wonderfully delivered by the arm of the Lord, his whole soul blesses the Almighty. Well, indeed, might he now say: *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. The snare is broken and we are escaped. . . . Our help*

¹ Weissman, Hist. Eccl. i. p. 1237.

*is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.*¹ Thus Luther's heart was filled with joy. But his thoughts likewise return to de Vio: "The cardinal," says he to himself, "would fain have had me in his hands and have sent me to Rome. No doubt he is vexed at my having escaped from him. He fancied that he had me in his power at Augsburg; he made sure of having me; but he held the eel by the tail. Is it not a shame that these people should set such a value upon me? They would give many crown pieces to have me, whereas our Lord Jesus Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver."²

Luther travelled that first day fourteen leagues. On arriving in the evening at the inn where he was to pass the night, he was so fatigued (his horse, an historian tells us, had a very hard trot) that on coming from the saddle, unable to stand on his feet, he threw himself on the straw. However he enjoyed some rest. On the following day he resumed his journey. At Nuremberg he found Staupitz, engaged in visiting the monasteries of his order, and in that city he first saw the brief sent by the pope to Cajetan respecting him. He was indignant at it, and it is very probable that could he have read that brief before leaving Wittenberg, he never would have appeared in the cardinal's presence. "It is impossible to believe," says he, "that any thing so monstrous could have emanated from a sovereign pontiff."³

Everywhere along the road, Luther was an object of general interest. He had yielded nothing, and such a victory, gained by a begging friar over a representative of Rome, filled all hearts with admiration. Germany seemed now to be revenged on the contempt with which Italy regarded her. The eternal Word had been more honoured than that of the pope. That enormous power, which for so many ages had been lording it over the nations, had received a formidable check. Luther's progress was a triumph. The obstinacy displayed by Rome became a subject of congratulation, it being hoped that it would lead to her fall. Had she been less eager to preserve shameful gains, had she been wise enough not to despise the Germans, possibly, in so far as man could foresee, all things might have relapsed into that state of death from which Luther had awoke. But

¹ Ps. cxxiv.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 202.

³ Epp. i. p. 168.

the popedom would not yield; and the doctor found himself obliged to bring many more errors to light, and to advance in the knowledge and manifestation of the truth.

Luther reached Gräfen¹thal, at the extremity of the Thuringian forests, on the 26th of October, and there he met count Albert of Mansfeldt, the same who had so strongly dissuaded him from showing himself at Augsburg. The count laughed heartily when he saw his singular equipage. He laid hold of him and compelled him to be his guest. Luther soon resumed his journey.

He hastened on, wanting to be at Wittemberg on the 31st of October, as he thought that the elector would be there for the purpose of keeping the feast of All Saints, and that he might thus have an opportunity of seeing him. The brief which he had read at Nuremberg, had revealed to him the whole danger of his situation; and in fact, being already condemned at Rome, he had no hope of being allowed to remain at Wittemberg or to obtain an asylum in a monastery, or to live anywhere else in peace and safety. The emperor's protection might possibly defend him; but he was far of being sure of that. He no longer could hope anything from the two friends whom he had hitherto had at that prince's court. Staupitz had lost the favour he had so long enjoyed, and quitted Saxony; and Spalatin, though loved by Frederick, had no great influence with the prince. The elector himself was not sufficiently acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel, to expose himself, on their account, to manifest perils. Meanwhile, Luther thought that there was no better course for him to follow than to return to Wittemberg, and there to wait for what the everlasting and ever merciful God should determine for him. If, as was thought by many, they would leave him undisturbed, he wished to devote himself entirely to study and to the instruction of youth.¹

Luther returned to Wittemberg on the 30th of October; but all this haste proved useless. Neither the elector nor Spalatin had come to the festival. His friends were overjoyed to see him among them again. The very day of his arrival he hastened to inform his friend Spalatin: "I have this day reached Wittem-

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 183.

berg safe and sound, by the grace of God," says he, "but how long I shall remain here is more than I know. . . . I am filled with joy and peace, so much so that I am amazed that the trial I endure can appear so great to such a number of great personages."

De Vio had not waited long after Luther's departure, before exhaling his utmost indignation to the elector. His letter breathes vengeance throughout. He gives Frederick an account of the conference with an air of confidence: "Since friar Martin," says he in concluding, "cannot be induced by paternal methods to own his being in the wrong, and to continue faithful to the Catholic Church, I have to request that your Highness will send him to Rome, or banish him from your states. Be assured that this piece of business, so difficult, mischievous, and full of venom, cannot remain longer in suspense; for the moment I inform our most holy lord of so much craft and maliciousness, it will soon be brought to a close." In a postscript in his own handwriting, the cardinal solicits the elector not to cast a shameful slur on his own honour and that of his illustrious ancestors, for the sake of a wretched petty friar."¹

Never, perhaps, was Luther's soul filled with a nobler indignation than when reading the copy of this letter sent him by the elector. His heart swelled by turns at the thought of the sufferings he was doomed to endure, of the value of that truth which he was engaged to defend, and of the contemptible conduct of the Roman legate. His reply, written during the agitation into which his soul was thus thrown, is replete with that courage, that elevation, and that faith, which we ever find him exhibit in the most difficult conjunctures of his life. He gives in his turn, an account of the Augsburg conference; he next exposes the cardinal's conduct, and then goes on as follows:

"I should like to reply to the legate in the place of the elector:

"Prove that you speak according to knowledge, I should say to him, let the whole matter be committed to writing: I shall then send friar Martin to Rome, or I myself will apprehend him and put him to death. I will take care of my conscience and

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 203.

my honour, and will not allow any stain to soil my glory. But as long as that unhesitating learning of yours flees the light, and reveals itself only by clamours, I can give no credit to darkness.

“Thus it is that I would reply, most excellent prince! Let the reverend legate, or let the pope himself, point out my errors, specifically, in writing; let them exhibit their reasons; let them instruct me who am willing to be instructed, who beg instruction, who desire it, who am waiting for it, in such sort that even a Turk would not refuse it me. If I do not retract and condemn myself, on its being proved to me that the passages I have adduced should be understood otherwise than I have understood them, then, O most excellent elector, let your highness be the first to prosecute and to banish me; let the university repudiate me and overwhelm me with its wrath. . . . Nay more, and I call heaven and earth to witness, let the Lord Jesus Christ reject and condemn me! . . . The words that I say, are not dictated by a vain presumption, but by an unalterable conviction. I am content that the Lord God withdraw his grace from me and that every creature of God refuse me favour, if on being shown better doctrine, I embrace it not.¹ Should they carry their contempt for me too far, on account of the baseness of my condition, me a poor begging friar, and refuse to instruct me in the way of the truth, your highness might ask the legate to point out to you wherein I have erred; and should they refuse this favour even to your highness, let them write out their views, either for his imperial majesty or for one of the archbishops of Germany. What ought I to say, what can I say farther?

“Let your highness listen to the voice of honour and of conscience, and not send me to Rome. No man can command this at your hands; for at Rome it is impossible for me to be safe. The pope himself is not in safety there. It would be to enjoin

¹ Here we have the protestations of a sincere regard for truth. Can it be said that men have ever endeavoured in anywise to satisfy these? That ought always first to have been put to proof: and only then could any one be entitled, supposing a man to have had the means and yet have found the endeavour unavailing, to speak of obstinacy. Or could the pope's legate, or the pope himself, have been less obliged to this than an apostle who notwithstanding his infallible authority, still did his utmost to produce conviction in Christians and said, “I speak to those who understand, judge ye what I say?” Yet the hindrance there was that people aimed at an object which was evil, which could not have been proved out of God's word, but was opposed to it.—L. R.

you to betray a Christian's blood. They have paper, pen and ink; they have also an infinite number of notaries there. They can easily write out in what things and how I have erred. It will cost them less to instruct me by writing when absent, than to make me die by stratagem while there.

"I resign myself to exile. My adversaries lay snares for me on every hand, so that I can no where live in security. That no mischief may come upon you on my account, I withdraw from your states in the name of God. I wish to go where the eternal and merciful God would have me to be. Let him do with me what seemeth to him good!

"Now then, most serene elector, I salute you with veneration; I recommend you to the eternal God, and I give you everlasting thanks for all your benefits towards me. Whatever people I shall dwell among in future, I shall ever remember you, and will ever pray, unceasingly and gratefully, for you and yours.¹ . . . I am still, thank God, full of joy, and I bless him, in that Christ, the Son of God, accounts me worthy to suffer in so holy a cause. May he ever preserve your illustrious Highness! Amen."

This letter, so full of truth, profoundly impressed the elector. "He was shaken by a most eloquent letter," says Maimbourg.² Never could he have thought of delivering an innocent person into the power of Rome; perhaps he might have invited Luther to keep himself for a time in concealment; but he was averse to seem in any way to yield to the legate's threats. He wrote to his councillor, Pfeffinger, who was then with the emperor, to inform that prince how matters really stood, and to intreat that he would write to Rome that the affair must be brought to a close, or at least that instructions should be given for its being tried in Germany by impartial judges.³

¹ Ego enim ubicunque ero gentium, illustrissimæ Dominationis tuæ nunquam non ero memor. . . . (L. Epp. i. 187.)

² Thus does Maimbourg ascribe to mere eloquence what were genuine effusions of the heart. In the same spirit it will perhaps be maintained that all the cordial protestations, all the outpourings of his soul, to be found in Luther's letters, the truthfulness and sincerity of which are plain and palpable, and which are enough of themselves to prove these qualities, are but elaborate tricks of art, arranged perhaps so cunningly, the better to deceive. Here we cannot fail to be reminded of the landlord who judged all his guests by himself. Yet, indeed, we give these false and crafty slanderers somewhat to do, if we would have them as naturally counterfeit the unborrowed language of sincerity and truth.—L. R.

³ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 244.

Some days afterwards, the elector replied to the legate. "In as much as Dr. Martin appeared before you at Augsburg, you ought to be satisfied. We did not expect that without having convicted him of error, you should pretend to compel him to retract. None of the learned men who are to be found in our principalities, has told us that Martin's doctrine is impious, anti-christian, and heretical." The prince then refuses to send Luther to Rome and to expel him from his states.

This letter was communicated to Luther and filled him with gladness. "Good God!" he wrote to Spalatin, "how joyfully have I perused and re-perused it. I know how amply we can trust his words, so full at once of a force and of a modesty, both so admirable. I fear the Romans may not comprehend their full meaning; but this at least they will comprehend, that what they thought was already finished, is not even begun. Be so good as present my thanks to the prince. It is strange that he (de Vio,) who a short time ago was a mendicant monk like myself, is not afraid to address the most powerful princes without respect, to summon them to answer to him, to threaten them, to send them his orders, and to treat them with inconceivable haughtiness. Let him learn that the temporal power is of God, and that it is not lawful for a man to trample its glory under-foot."¹

Frederick had, no doubt, been encouraged to reply to the legate in a tone which the latter did not expect, by a letter addressed to him on this occasion by the university of Wittemberg. It had good reasons for pronouncing in the doctor's favour; for it was flourishing more and more and was eclipsing all the other schools. A crowd of students flocked to it from all parts of Germany, to hear that extraordinary man whose instructions seemed to open up a new era in religion and learning. These youths as they came up from all the provinces, made a halt as soon as they perceived the Church towers of Wittemberg in the distance; they then raised their hands to heaven, and praised God for having caused the light of truth to beam upon that city as on Zion of old, and for sending it thence to the most distant countries.² A life, an activity, hitherto unknown, animated

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 198.

² Scultet. Annal. i. p. 17.

the university. "We study here with the industry of a swarm of ants," said Luther.¹

XI. Thinking that he might soon be banished from Germany, Luther occupied himself with the publication of the minutes of the conference at Augsburg. These he wished should be a standing memorial of the struggle between him and Rome. He saw the storm ready to burst forth, but he feared it not. He was daily expecting the curses of Rome; and was so arranging and ordering everything that when they came, they might not find him unprepared. "Having folded up my robe and girded my loins," said he, "I am ready to set out like Abraham, without knowing whither I shall go, or rather very well knowing that, since God is everywhere."² He intended to leave behind him a farewell letter. "Have the courage then," he wrote to Spalatin, "to read the letter of a cursed and excommunicated man."

His friends were now alarmed and anxious about him; they besought him to place himself as a prisoner in the hands of the elector, so that the prince might see to his being safely guarded somewhere.³

His enemies could not imagine what gave him all this confidence. Being the topic of conversation one day at the court of the bishop of Brandenburg, it was asked, what was the assistance on which he could rely. "He looks to Erasmus, said one, to Capito said another, while others said that it was not to such learned men as those that he looked."—"No, no," replied the bishop, "the pope is not likely to trouble himself much about such people. He trusts to the university of Wittenberg and to the duke of Saxony." . . . Thus none knew to what fortress the Reformer had betaken himself. Luther's mind was agitated by the thoughts of his departure; not that this arose from the dread of danger, but because he foresaw an interminable succession of obstacles likely to rise up in Germany to the free profession of the truth. "Should I remain here," said he, "I shall be deprived of the liberty of saying and writing many things;

¹ Studium nostrum more formicarum fervet. (L. Epp. i. p. 193.)

² Quia Deus ubique. (L. Epp. i. p. 188.)

³ Ut principi me in captivitate darem. (Ibid., p. 189.)

should I go, I shall pour forth my whole heart without restraint and offer my life to Christ.”¹

France was the country in which Luther hoped to have it in his power to preach the truth without let or hindrance. He thought that the freedom then enjoyed by the doctors of the university of Paris might well be envied; and, besides, he was of one mind with them on many points. What would have been the result, had he been transported from Wittemberg into France? Would the Reformation have been established there as it became established in Germany? Would the power of Rome have been disenthroned there, and instead of being destined to be the arena on which the hierarchical principles of Rome were long to struggle with the destructive principles of an irreligious philosophy, would France have become a grand focus of evangelical light! It is idle on such a subject to indulge in vain conjectures; yet it is possible that, had he gone to Paris, Luther might have wrought important changes in the destinies of Europe and of France.

The soul of Luther was now deeply moved. He often preached in Wittemberg church in the place of Simon Heyns Pontanus, pastor of the city, who was almost always an invalid. He thought it his duty, at any risk, to take leave of the people to whom he had so often preached salvation. “I,” said he one day in the pulpit, “am a very little fixed and very uncertain preacher. How many times already, have I gone away all at once, without so much as bidding you farewell. . . . Should this again occur, and should I never return to you, you may consider this as my farewell.” Then after adding some words more, he wound up by saying, calmly and mildly: “Finally, I warn you not to allow yourselves to be terrified, should the papal censures break forth against me furiously. Impute not this to the pope, and wish no evil either to him or to any person whatsoever, but commit the whole affair to God.”^{2 3}

¹ Si iero totum effundam et vitam offeram Christo. (L. Epp. i. p. 180.)

² Deo rem committerent. (L. Epp. i. 191.)

³ Spalatin having had these concluding words reported to him, supposed that Luther had made up his mind to go. The words immediately preceding the above, prove, however, that this was not the case. M. Michelet has given them: “You have been misinformed,” he wrote to Spalatin, “*I have not taken farewell of the people at Wittemberg*; it is true, I spoke nearly as follows: You all know me to be a variable and uncertain preacher,” &c. see *Memoires de Luther ecrits par lui-meme, traduits et mis en ordre par M. Michelet*. Brussels edition, vol. i. p. 45. TR.

And now the time seemed at last to have arrived. The prince gave Luther to know that he wished to see him withdraw to a distance from Wittenberg, and the Elector's wishes were too sacred in his eyes for him not to show himself eager to comply with them. Accordingly, he made preparations for his departure without very well knowing in what direction he should go. Meanwhile he wished once more to have his friends together, and with this view prepared for them a farewell entertainment. Seated at the same table with them, he once more enjoyed their pleasant conversation—their fond and fear-foreboding friendship. A letter is brought in for him. . . . It is from the court. He opens and reads it with a fluttering heart; it contains fresh orders for his departure. The prince wishes to know “why he delays his departure so long.” He feels overwhelmed with sorrow, yet, resuming his courage and looking up, he says, firmly and rejoicingly, as he looks round the company: “Father and mother forsake me, but the Lord takes me up.”¹ He now must go—his friends were all in commotion. What was to become of him? If Luther's very protector repudiates him, who is to receive him? And the gospel, and the truth, and that admirable work . . . all, doubtless, must now fall to nothing, together with the illustrious witness. The fate of the Reformation seemed to be suspended on a thread, and might not that thread be expected to snap, the moment that Luther left the walls of Wittenberg? Few were the words that passed between Luther and his friends; the blow that had reached their brother, brought a flood of tears to their eyes. But, after a few minutes waiting, there came another letter, which was opened by Luther in full expectation that it must be a fresh summons. But, O mighty hand of the Lord! for the present he is safe. The whole aspect of things was altered. “As the new envoy from the pope is hopeful,” it said, “that all may yet be settled by means of a colloquy, remain still where you are.”² What a momentous hour was this! And what might have been the result if Luther, who was always eager to conform to his prince's will, had left Wittenberg immediately on his receiving his first letter? Never were Luther and the Reforma-

Vater und Mutter verlassen mich, aber der Herr nimmt mich auf.

² L. Opp. xv. 824.

tion at so low an ebb as at that moment. It seemed to be all over with their destinies: but these were changed in a twinkling. After reaching the lowest stage in his career, the Wittenberg doctor instantly rose again, and from that time forth his influence went on increasing. The Lord commands, in the language of the prophet, and his servants go down into the depths and mount up again to the heavens.¹

Spalatin sent for Luther to come to Lichtemberg, that at that place, in compliance with orders from Frederick, he might have an interview with him. There they talked long over the position of affairs. "Should the censures come from Rome," said Luther, "I shall certainly not remain at Wittenberg."—"Take care," rejoined Spalatin, "not to be too precipitate in your journey to France!"² He parted from him, bidding him wait until he should hear from him. "Only recommend my soul to Christ," said Luther to his friends. "I see that my opponents strengthen themselves in their purpose of destroying me; but Christ at the same time strengthens me in that of not yielding to them."³

Luther then published the *Acts of the Conference of Augsburg*; Spalatin wrote to him, on the part of the Elector, not to do so, but the letter came too late, and the publication once made, the prince gave it his approbation.⁴ "Great God!" says Luther in the preface, "what a new, what an astonishing crime, to search for light and truth! and especially in the Church, that is to say, in truth's own kingdom."—"I send you my acts," he wrote to Link: "they are more trenchant than the lord legate doubtless looked for; but my pen is ready to give birth to much greater things. I myself know not where my

¹ If ever an intervention of Providence could be regarded as a proof at the same time of the upright and godly intention of any man, and of the soundness of a cause, it is most surely this—so personal—so unlooked for, and so opportune; so manifest an answer to the confident trust that had just before been expressed, and to the still prayer of men's hearts: in one word, it was a truly wondrous act of the Deity for the rescue of Luther and the Reformation! —L. R.

² Ne tam cito in Galliam irem. (L. Epp. i. p. 195.)

³ Firmat Christus propositum non cedendi in me. (Ibid.)

⁴ According to a letter of Luther's quoted by M. Michelet, the Elector seems to have changed his mind previous to the work being put to press. This hesitation on the Elector's part," says M. Michelet, "appears in a letter of Luther's: 'The prince had quite put me off publishing the Acts of the Conference of Augsburg, then he permitted it, and they are printing.'" Tr.

thoughts come from. In my judgment, that affair has not yet had a commencement,¹ so far are the great folks of Rome from being able as yet to hope for its being ended. I will send you what I have written, that you may see how far I have guessed aright in believing that the Antichrist spoken of by St. Paul, is now reigning in the court of Rome. I believe I shall be able to demonstrate that he is worse at this day than the Turks themselves.”

Untoward rumours now reached Luther from all quarters. One friend wrote to him that the new envoy from Rome had orders to seize him and deliver him over to the pope. Another reported this tale, that being on a journey, he happened to meet somewhere with a courtier, and that the conversation falling on the affairs that were then engrossing all Germany, the latter declared to him that he had come under an engagement to deliver Luther into the hands of the sovereign pontiff. “But the more they rage and affect violent methods,” wrote the Reformer, “the less I tremble.”²

People were exceedingly displeased with Cajetan at Rome, all the ill humour that was felt at the failure of this affair having vented itself in the first instance on him. The men at court in Rome, thought themselves entitled to reproach him with having been wanting in that prudence and that subtile policy which, if one was to believe them, ought to be the chief qualities of a legate, and for not having known, on so important an occasion, how to relax the stiffness of his scholastic theology. The whole blame lies upon him, it was said. His heavy pedantry has spoilt all. Why have irritated Luther by threats and insults, instead of coaxing him over by the promise of a good bishoprick, or even of a cardinal's hat?^{3 4} These mercenary souls

¹ Res ista necdum habet initium suum meo iudicio. (Ibid. p. 193.)

² Quo illi magis furunt, et vi affectant viam, eo minus ego terreor. (L. Epp i. p. 191.)

³ Sarpi, Council of Trent. p. 8.

⁴ According to M. Michelet in his “Memoirs of Luther,” Cajetan's unpopularity at Rome preceded his interview with the Reformer. “He” (Cajetan) “had himself,” says M. Michelet, “written in favour of the lawfulness of interpreting Scripture without following the torrent of the fathers (*contra torrentem S. S. Patrum*). This bold opinion had made him so far suspected of heresy.” See *Memoires de Luther, as before*, vol. i. p. 38. There is a peculiar interest, if, as, is very possible, de Vio secretly agreed with Luther in some of his opinions, in the providential appointment of the former to be the grand instrument that was to try the latter's sincerity and steadfastness. May we not

judged of Luther by themselves. Meanwhile, this fault must be repaired. Rome must pronounce her opinion on the one hand; and, on the other, must deal tenderly with the elector, who might come to be of great service in the election of an emperor, which was speedily to take place. It being impossible for the Roman ecclesiastics to have any suspicion of the effects of Luther's strength of mind and courage, they imagined that the elector was much more implicated in the affair than he really was. The pope, therefore, resolved to adopt a different course. He caused a bull to be published in Germany by his legate, confirming the doctrine of indulgences in the precise points which had been impugned, but making no mention either of the elector or of Luther. As the Reformer had said all along, that he would submit to the decision of the Roman Church, the pope thought that he must now either keep his word, or exhibit himself as a manifest disturber of the Church and despiser of the holy apostolic see. In either case the pope, it appeared, could not fail to be a gainer; but nothing is truly gained by an obstinate resistance to the truth. In vain had the pope threatened excommunication against whosoever should teach otherwise than he ordained. It is not by such orders that an arrest can be laid upon the light, and it would have been wiser to temper by certain restrictions the pretensions of the sellers of indulgences. Hence this decree from Rome was a new blunder. By legalising crying errors, it made all wise men angry, and shut the door against Luther's return. "It was believed," says a Roman Catholic historian, a great enemy to the Reformation,¹ "that this bull had been drawn up purely in the interest of the pope and of the money-collectors, who were beginning

ascribe to a secret consciousness of the general soundness of his opponent's views, the cardinal-legate's willingness to leave the question open with respect to the doctrine of grace being required in the sacraments—his apparent determination to avoid discussion on some very important points, while he permitted it in others—his eagerness to subject Luther to the same absolute and abject submission to the papal system which his conscience may have rebuked him for exhibiting himself, and the evident dread with which Luther had inspired him—a dread in such a case so naturally conjoined with the hatred that led him to call the Reformer a brute of deep eyes and wonderful speculations, with whom he could no longer hold debate. In the order of Divine Providence, we apprehend that the Augsburg conferences were a sifting time for both Luther and de Vio; out of which the former came more faithful and courageous, the latter more treacherous and cowardly to certain great truths, so far known to both. TR.

¹ Maimburg. p. 38.

to find that nobody liked to pay anything for these indulgences."

Cardinal de Vio published the decree at Lintz, in Austria, on December 13th, 1518; but Luther was already safe from his attempts. On the 20th of November he had entered an appeal in the chapel of Corpus Christi at Wittemberg, from the pope to a general council of the Church. He foresaw the storm that was about to be let loose upon him; he knew that God only could conjure it away; but what he himself was called to do, that he did. No doubt he must leave Wittemberg, were it only on the elector's account, as soon as the Roman maledictions should arrive; yet he did not wish to abandon Saxony and Germany without a very public protest. He therefore composed such a protest, and that it might be ready for publication the moment that the furies of Rome should reach him, as he expresses it, he gave it to be printed on the precise condition that the bookseller should deposit all the copies with him. But greed of gain led that person to sell nearly the whole impression, while Luther was quietly waiting for the deposit. Luther was angry; but the thing was done. That bold protest found its way everywhere. Luther anew declared in it that he had no intention of saying anything against the Holy Church, or against the authority of the apostolic see, or against the pope when properly counselled. "But," he continues, "in as much as the pope, who is God's vicar on the earth, may like any other man, err, sin, lie, and that the appeal to the general council is the only safeguard against unjust actions which it is impossible to resist, I find myself obliged to have recourse to it."^{1 2}

¹ Löscher, Ref. Act.

² Luther at this period may be regarded as a Jansenist in regard to the doctrines of grace, only with views even more scriptural; and as a Galican, in regard to his views of the fallibility and peccability of the pope.

The doctrine that the pope cannot err in doctrine, or in matters of fact, is too convenient not to have found many abettors among Roman Catholics down to our own day. It has been maintained in its broadest extent by the Jesuits in particular, who as the pope's own militia, naturally seek to aggrandise their immediate master at the expense of other authorities, both temporal and spiritual, even in their own church. The famous Jansenist, M. Nicole, asserts, that finding they could not directly teach the doctrine of the pope's superiority to kings, in temporal matters, (as laid down in the extravagant *Unam sanctam* of Boniface VIII.) without incurring an overwhelming opposition from the parliaments, &c. in France, they began to inculcate that of the pope's infallibility as clearly involving the other "For as they never abandon what they have once undertaken," says M. Nicole in his *Pernicieuses consequences de la nouvelle heresie*

Here, then, we have the Reformation launched into a new sphere. It is no longer made dependent on the pope and his resolutions, but on a general council. Luther addresses himself to the whole Church, and the voice that proceeds from Corpus Christi chapel, must pass through all the Lord's flocks. It was not courage in which the Reformer was wanting, for here we have a new proof of that quality. Shall God be wanting to him? This is what we shall learn from the different periods of the Reformation which remain yet to be unfolded before us.

des Jesuites, contre le Roi et contre l'etat, "they have found ways and means of establishing this pernicious doctrine in a more adroit and dangerous manner: for not daring to propose it grossly and in itself, they labour more subtly to establish the principles on which, by necessary consequence, it depends; well reckoning that if they can by this artifice elude the vigilance of the Magistrates and of the Sorbonne, it will be very easy for them to make the people receive as an indubitable truth what they can easily demonstrate to be a necessary consequence flowing from what they shall have previously made to pass for a Catholic truth."

The doctrine seems to have fallen and risen, generally speaking, with the credit and influence of the Jesuits. Their suppression by Clement XIV. and the general outcry against them throughout Roman Catholic Europe about eighty years ago, having been followed by the reign of flagrant atheism in France, and the horrors and convulsions that so long desolated the continent thereafter, the opinion began to gain ground, that those calamities were at once the natural consequence and providential punishment of their suppression. Hence their revival by the pope in 1814, followed by the return of their extravagant tenets on the subject of papal infallibility. So boldly were these announced in France, particularly by M. Bonald during the reign of Charles X. that the Paris bar took alarm, and followed up the famous *Memoire à consulter* of the count de Montlosier, by obtaining the execution of the old laws against the Jesuits, so that in 1827 they were anew expelled from France. They are said to have again returned in the face of these laws and to be found at various places, not however, it may well be believed, as the hardy promulgators of any unpopular doctrines.

In maintaining that the popes could err, Luther held only what popes themselves have repeatedly confessed. In a law opinion by the king's counsellors of Louis XIV. dated June 1665, this fact is established by the recorded opinions of popes Paul IV., Adrian VI., Gregory XI., John XXII., who retracted a purely theological doctrine on the future blessedness of the redeemed, in consequence of being threatened with being treated as an heretic by king Philip of France; Clement V., Innocent III., Paschal II., Leo III., &c. Pope Honorius I. was condemned as a Monothelite by the 6th, 7th, and 8th councils; the story of his error and condemnation used to be the second lesson in the office read on St. Peter and St. Paul's eve, and the popes at one time anathematised him at their consecration. See *Diurnus Ecclesiæ Romanæ*, quoted in the *Annales de la Société des soi-disans Jesuites*, tom. v. p. 751. In short, we must attribute the resentment excited by Luther's insubordination to the pope, neither to his denying his infallibility as a principle, nor to his disowning it in fact, but to these being connected with a protest against papal corruptions of Christian doctrine and manners. Tr.

BOOK FIFTH.

THE LEIPSICK DISPUTATION.

(1519.)

I. DANGERS were now fast thickening round Luther and the Reformation. The Wittemberg doctor's appeal to a general council aimed a new thrust at the papal power. By a bull of Pius II. the greater excommunication was pronounced against even emperors, should they dare to incur the guilt of such a revolt. Frederick of Saxony, little established as yet in the doctrines of the Gospel, was about to dismiss Luther from his states.¹ Thus a new message from Leo X. must have thrown the Reformer among strangers, who would have been afraid to compromise themselves by receiving a monk lying under the malediction of Rome. And even had the sword of some feudal lord been unsheathed in his defence, a few plain knights would have been despised by the powerful princes of Germany, and must have soon given way in so hazardous an undertaking.

But at the moment when all men at the court of Leo X. were urging him to adopt rigorous measures, and when one final blow would have delivered his adversary into his hands, that pope all at once changed his plans, and entered on a course of conciliation and apparent mildness.² It may, no doubt, be said that he mistook the elector's feelings towards Luther, believing them to be far more favourable than they really were; we may admit that public opinion and the spirit of the age, two new influences at that time, seemed in his eye to throw an inaccess-

¹ The elector's letter to his envoy at Rome. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 298.)

² *Rationem agendi prorsus oppositam inire statuit.* (Cardinal Pallavicini, Hist. Concil. Trid. vol. i. p. 51.)

sible rampart around the Reformer; we may suppose, as one of Leo's historians has done,¹ that he yielded to the suggestions of his judgment and of his heart, both which inclined him to mildness and moderation; but this novel course of action at Rome, at such a conjuncture, is too strange for us to refuse to acknowledge in it the presence of a higher and a mightier hand.

A noble Saxon, chamberlain to the pope and canon of Maintz, Treves, and Meissen, happened to be then at the court of Rome, and had contrived to make himself a person of consequence there. He boasted of relationship with the Saxon princes, so that the Roman courtiers sometimes gave him the title of the duke of Saxony. While in Italy he made an absurd display of his German nobility, and in Germany he awkwardly imitated the polished manners and elegancies of Italy. Fond of wine,² this passion had grown upon him during his stay at the court of Rome. Yet on this person the men at that court built high expectations. His German origin, insinuating manners, skill in business, every thing, in short, led them to hope that Charles of Miltitz, for that was his name, would by prudent management succeed in checking the mighty revolution which now threatened to unsettle the whole world.

It was of importance that the true object of the Roman chamberlain's mission should be concealed, and this was done without difficulty. Four years preceding this, the pious elector had sent a request to the pope for a golden rose. That rose, the loveliest of flowers, represented the body of Jesus Christ; it was consecrated every year by the sovereign pontiff, and presented to one of the first princes of Europe. It was resolved to send it this time to the elector. Miltitz set out with instructions to examine how matters stood, and to gain over the elector's counsellors, Spalatin and Pfeffinger. He had procured private letters addressed to them. By this attempt to conciliate those who were about the prince, Rome thought she might soon have her redoubtable enemy in her power.

The new legate reached Germany in December 1518. Along the road he had been at pains to sound public opinion,

¹ See Roscoe's *Life of Leo X.*, vol. iv. p. 2.

² Nec ab usu immoderato vini abstinuit. (Pallavicini, *Hist. Concil. Trid.* i. p. 69.)

and to his utter amazement had everywhere observed that the majority of the inhabitants sided with the Reformation¹—that Luther was spoken of everywhere with enthusiasm—that for one person that favoured the pope, there were three in favour of the Reformer:² Luther has preserved a trait of his mission. “What think you of the papal chair at Rome?” the legate often asked of the landladies and maid-servants at the inns. One day, one of these poor women replied with great simplicity: “To tell you the truth, we don’t know whether the chairs you have at Rome be made of stone or wood.”³

Nothing more was wanted to fill the elector’s court, the university, the city of Wittemberg, and all Saxony, with suspicion and distrust, than the mere report that a new legate had arrived. “Thank God, Martin is still alive,” wrote the terrified Melancthon.⁴ It was positively asserted, that the Roman chamberlain had orders to apprehend Luther by fair means or by foul, and the doctor was urged on all sides to be on his guard against the traps set for him by Miltitz. “He has come,” people said, “for the purpose of apprehending you and delivering you over to the pope. Credible witnesses have seen the briefes he brings along with him.” “I wait on God’s will,” replied Luther.⁵

Miltitz did, in fact, arrive charged with letters addressed to the elector, his counsellors, the bishops, and the burgo-master of the city of Wittemberg. He was provided with seventy apostolic briefes, and should the flatteries and favours of Rome attain their object, should Frederick deliver Luther into his hands, these seventy briefes would, in some sort, serve him as passports. He proposed to take out and post up one of them, at each of the towns he had to pass through, and hoped thus to drag his prisoner, without opposition, as far as Rome.⁶

¹ *Suscitatus per viam Mitilius quânam esset in æstimatione Lutherus. . . . sensit de eo cum admiratione homines loqui.* (Pallavicini, *Hist. Concil. Trid.* Tom. i. p. 51.)

² *Ecce ubi unum pro papa stare inveni, tres pro te contra papam stabant.* (L. Opp. Lat. in Præf.)

³ *Quid nos scire possumus quales vos Romæ habeatis sellas, ligneasne an lapideas?* (Ibid.)

⁴ *Martinus noster, Deo gratias, adhuc spirat.* (Corpus Reformatorum edidit Bretschneider, i. 61.)

⁵ *Expecto consilium Dei.* (L. Epp. i. p. 191.)

⁶ *Per singula oppida affigeret unum, et ita tutus me perduceret Romam.* (L. Opp. Lat. in Præf.)

The pope seemed to have taken all his measures, and already at the elector's court people were hesitating on which side to range themselves. Violence might be resisted, but who could think of opposing the chief of all Christendom, speaking so mildly and with so much apparent reason? Might it not be well, it was said, to put Luther in some place of concealment until the storm shall blow by? . . . It was now that an unforeseen event, extricated Luther, the elector, and the Reformation, from this crisis. The whole aspect of the world was in a moment changed.

On the 12th of January, 1519, Maximilian, emperor of Germany, died; and Frederick of Saxony, in conformity with the German constitution, began to administer the affairs of the empire. From that time forth the elector needed not to fear the projects of the nuncios. New interests began to agitate the court of Rome, obliged it to deal tenderly with Frederick in its negotiations with him, and at once arrested the blow which there can be no doubt was meditated by Miltitz and de Vio.

The pope was particularly desirous that Charles of Austria, already king of Naples, should not be called to the imperial throne, thinking that he had more reason to dread a king, his neighbour, than a monk in Germany. Wishing to make sure of the elector, whose assistance in this affair might be of the utmost use to him, he resolved to relax in his severity to the monk, the better to oppose the king; but both made progress in spite of him. Such was the change in Leo X.

Yet another circumstance occurred to avert the storm that now threatened the Reformation. No sooner was the emperor dead than new political troubles broke out. In the south of the empire, the Suabian confederation wished to punish Ulrich of Wirtemberg, who had been wanting in his fidelity to it; while, in the north, the bishop of Hildesheim threw himself, in arms, on the bishoprick of Minden and the territories of the Duke of Brunswick. Amid such a turmoil as this, how could the great ones of this world attach any importance to a dispute about the remission of sins? But what God made especially serviceable to the progress of the Reformation, was the high repute for wisdom enjoyed by the elector, now become vicar of the empire, and the protection that he gave to the new teachers. "The storm suspended its fury," says Luther; "the papal excommunication

began to fall into contempt. Under the shelter of the elector's vicariat the Gospel diffused itself far and wide, and the result was that great damage was done to the popedom."¹

Moreover, it was natural that during an interregnum, the severest prohibitions should so far lose their force, and all things become more free and easy. The ray of liberty that beamed upon those beginnings of the Reformation, powerfully promoted the growth of that still delicate plant, and henceforward we can perceive how favourable political liberty would prove to the progress of evangelical Christianity.

Miltitz, who had reached Saxony before Maximilian's decease, hastened to pay his respects to his old friend, Spalatin; but hardly had he commenced his complaints against Luther, than the chaplain broke out against Tetzel, calling the nuncio's attention to the lies and blasphemies of the dealer in indulgences, and declaring that the schism then rending the Church was ascribed by all Germany to that Dominican.

Miltitz was in amazement. From being accuser, he had become the accused. Upon Tetzel he now vented all his wrath. He summoned him to repair to Altenburg and to justify himself in his presence.

The Dominican, no less a coward than a bravado, had, from a dread of the people whom he had irritated by his deceptions, given up passing through the towns and villages, and kept himself ensconced in the college of St. Paul at Leipsick. He grew pale on receiving Miltitz's letter. Even Rome now abandoned him; she threatened—she condemned him; she would drag him from the only asylum in which he can fancy himself safe, and expose him to the wrath of his enemies. . . . Tetzel refused to appear at the nuntio's call. "Assuredly," he wrote to Miltitz on the 31st of December 1518, "I should not grudge the pains the journey would cost, could I leave Leipsick without risking my life; but the Augustinian, Martin Luther, has stirred up and incensed powerful men against me to such a pitch that I am no where safe. Many of Luther's partizans have vowed my death. Thus I cannot go to meet you."² A striking contrast is presented by these two men then immured, the one in St. Paul's

¹ *Tunc desiit paululum sævire tempestas.* . . . (L. Opp. L. in Præf.)

² Löschner, ii. 567.

college at Leipsick, and the other in the monastery of the Augustinians at Wittemberg; the servant of God shows an unfaltering courage in the presence of danger, while the servant of men betrays a despicable cowardice.

Miltitz's orders were to employ the arms of persuasion first, and only in the event of these proving unsuccessful was he to produce his seventy briefes, and at the same time to avail himself of all the favours that Rome could bestow, in order to induce the elector to take part in crushing Luther. Accordingly, he signified his desire to have an interview with the Reformer; Spalatin offered the use of his house for the purpose, and Luther left Wittemberg for Altenburg on the 2d or 3d of January.

At this interview Miltitz exhausted all the finessing of a diplomatist and of a Roman courtier. No sooner had Luther arrived than the nuntio approached him with strong expressions of friendship. Oh! thought Luther, "how his violence has been changed into the most admirably dissembled kindness! This modern Saul came into Germany armed with seventy apostolic briefes, to carry me off to Rome, like a felon, loaded with chains, but the Lord has overthrown him by the way."¹

"My dear Martin," said the pope's chamberlain to him in a coaxing tone, "I had thought you an old divine who sat quietly nursing theological whims by your fire side; but I see you are a young man as yet, and in the prime of life."² Do you know," says he, assuming a graver tone, "that you have carried off the whole world from the pope, and have attached it to yourself?"³ Miltitz was well aware that people best succeed in seducing others by flattering their pride; but in this case he little knew the man that he had to deal with. "Had I an army of five and twenty thousand men," he added, "truly I would not undertake to carry you out of this country and convey you to Rome."⁴ Notwithstanding all her might, Rome felt herself weak in presence of a poor monk; and the monk was conscious

¹ Sed per viam a Domino prostratus. . . . mutavit violentiam in benevolentiam fallacissimè simulatam. (L. Epp. i. p. 206.)

² O Martine, ego credebam te esse senem aliquem theologicum, qui post fornacem sedens. . . . (L. Opp. in Præf.)

³ Quod orbem totum mihi conjunxerim et papæ abstraxerim. (L. Epp. i. p. 231.)

⁴ Si haberem 25 millia armatorum, non confiderem te posse a me Romam perducī. (L. Opp. Lat. in Præf.)

of his power in the presence of Rome. "God stays the sea waves on the beach," Luther could say, "and he stays them with sand."¹

Thinking he had now made the requisite impression on the mind of his opponent, the nuntio proceeded to say: "You yourself ought to staunch the wound that the Church has received, and which you only can heal." "Beware," he added, at the same time allowing a few tears to fall, "beware of raising a storm which may cause the ruin of Christianity."² From that he went on gradually to insinuate that a retractation was what alone could repair the evil that had been done; but immediately softened down the possible harshness of the word, by giving Luther to understand that he held him in the highest esteem, and by inveighing against Tetzl. The net was laid by a skilful hand: how was it that it failed of its aim? "Had the archbishop of Maintz spoken to me thus from the commencement," said the Reformer afterwards, "this affair would not have made so much noise."³

It was now Luther's turn to speak. He stated the just complaints of the Church with calm force and dignity; gave full utterance to his indignation at the bishop of Maintz; and complained, in a noble spirit, of the unworthy treatment which, notwithstanding the purity of his intentions, he had received from Rome. Little as he expected to be addressed in so firm a tone, Miltitz took care to suppress his anger.

"I offer," rejoined Luther, to maintain silence in future on these matters and to allow the affair to die out of itself,⁴ provided my opponents are silent on their side; but should they continue to attack me, we shall, ere long, have a serious battle instead of a petty quarrel. My arms are all in readiness. I will do more still," he added an instant after, "I will write to his Holiness, acknowledging that I have been rather over violent, and telling him that it has been as a faithful child of the Church that I have attacked discourses delivered from the pulpit, that have incurred the sneers and insults of the people; I consent even to

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xxii.

² Profusis lacrymis ipsum oravit, ne tam perniciosam Christiano generi tempestatem cieret. (Pallavicini, i. 52.)

³ Non evasisset res in tantum tumultum. (L. Opp. Lat. in Pract.)

⁴ Und die Sache sich zu Tode bluten. (L. Epp. i. 207.)

publish a document in which I shall call upon all who read my writings, not to view them as attacking the Roman Church, and urging them to remain subject to that Church. Yes, I am ready to do all and to endure all; but as for a retractation, never think to get my consent to that."

Miltitz could perceive from the decided tone of Luther, that his most prudent course was to seem satisfied with what the Reformer had been pleased to promise. He merely proposed that an archbishop should be taken as arbiter in regard to some points which called for discussion. "Be it so," said Luther; "but I much fear the pope may not be willing to accept a judge; in which case as little will I accept the judgment of the pope, and then the contest will be begun anew. The pope will compose the text and I shall be commentator."

Thus closed the first interview between Luther and Miltitz; it was followed by a second in which the truce, or rather the peace, was signed, and Luther lost no time in communicating all that had passed to the elector in these terms: "Most serene prince and most gracious lord, I hasten most humbly to make known to your electoral highness that Charles of Miltitz and I have at length come to an arrangement, and have brought the matter to a close, by agreeing to the two following articles:

"First: Both parties are prohibited from all further preaching, writing, or acting, in regard to the dispute that has arisen.

"Secondly: Miltitz shall immediately inform the Holy Father of the state of matters. His Holiness shall ordain some enlightened bishop to hold an inquest on the affair, and to point out the erroneous articles which I ought to retract. If it be proved to me that I am in error I shall willingly retract, and will no longer do anything derogatory to the honour or authority of the Roman Church."^{1 2}

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 209.

² A new proof of Luther's unimpeachable integrity. Truth, not his own honour, was his object. He had not capriciously entered on a quarrel for the disturbance of the Church. On the contrary, he was even alarmed at seeing the consequences of the steps he had taken. Willingly would he do all in his power to heal the breach that had been occasioned, and to prevent a total rupture. Still he could make no sacrifice of his conscience. Thus he yielded all that he now could yield. Even that at a somewhat later period he found impossible, when the truth in all its fulness had completely enlightened him. All that he had to do with now was but the affair of the indulgences. Should these be held as abolished by Tetzel's traffic being disowned, and silence imposed on both parties, he would willingly accommodate matters, and even retract expressions

On this arrangement being made, Miltitz seemed quite overjoyed. "For a hundred years," he exclaimed, "no affair has cost the cardinals and Roman courtiers more anxiety than this. They would rather have given ten thousand ducats than have consented to its remaining longer unsettled."¹

The pope's chamberlain spared nothing that could express such feelings in the presence of the Wittenberg monk; at times he appeared overjoyed, at times gave way to tears. The Reformer was little affected by such exhibitions of sensibility, yet took care to keep his thoughts to himself. "I did not seem to comprehend what was meant by those crocodile's tears,"² says he. The crocodile is said to weep when it misses its prey.

Miltitz invited Luther to sup with him; the doctor accepted the invitation. At supper his host laid aside the stiffness of office, and Luther gave free scope to all the natural mirthfulness of his character. It was a right joyous repast,³ and when they had at last to separate, the legate embraced and kissed the heretical doctor.⁴ "A Judas's kiss," thought Luther. "I seemed like one," he wrote to Spalatin, "who could not understand these italicisms."⁵

Could that kiss have possibly sealed a reconciliation between Rome and the rising Reformation? Miltitz thought it might, and rejoiced that it should do so, for he had a closer view than men at the court of Rome could have, of the terrible consequences that the popedom might experience from the Reformation. If Luther and his opponents will but be quiet, he said to himself, the dispute will be at an end, and Rome will be able, by availing herself of favourable circumstances as they occur, to regain all her ancient influence. Hence it would appear that people were likely to see the conflict soon at an end, for Rome had opened her arms and Luther seemed to have thrown himself into them. The work, however, was that not

in which a somewhat excessive zeal had carried him too far, and wherever it could be fairly proved that he was in error. How noble does not his character and how pure do not his intentions appear in this, however shamelessly the lovers of slander may venture to cast a slur upon both!—L. R.

¹ Ab integro jam sæculo nullum negotium ecclesiæ contigisse quod majorem illi sollicitudinem incussisset. (Pallavicini, Tom. i. 52.)

² Ego dissimulabam has crocodili lacrymas a me intelligi. (L. Epp. i. 216.)

³ Atque vesperi me accepto, convivio lætati sumus. (Ibid. 231.)

⁴ Sic amice discessimus etiam cum osculo. (Judæ scilicet.) (Ibid. 216.)

⁵ Has italicitates. (L. Epp. i. 231.)

of man but of God. Rome's mistake lay in seeing but a monkish quarrel where in reality there was an awakening of the Church. The kisses of a pope's chamberlain could lay no arrest on the renovation of Christendom.

Faithful to the agreement he had just concluded, Miltitz left Altenburg for Leipsick, where Tetzel was. There was no need to shut his mouth, for rather than speak he would have hid himself in the bowels of the earth; but the nuncio wished to discharge all his wrath upon him. He had hardly arrived at Leipsick when he summoned the wretched Tetzel into his presence, and then loaded him with reproaches, charged him with being the author of all the mischief, and threatened him with the indignation of the pope.¹ Not only so, but he confronted him with the agent of the house of Fugger who happened to be in Leipsick at that time. Miltitz laid before the Dominican the accounts of that house, including the papers which he himself had signed, and convicted him of having squandered or embezzled considerable sums of money. . . . The wretched man, who had dreaded nothing in the days of his triumphs, now sank under these just accusations. He fell into despair; his health was affected; he knew not where to hide his shame. Luther became acquainted with the miserable condition of his former adversary, and was the only person affected by it. "I am sorry for Tetzel,"² he wrote to Spalatin, nor did his sympathy confine itself to words. It was not the man, it was the man's wicked deeds, that he had hated; and thus, while Rome was overwhelming him with her wrath, he wrote him a most consolatory letter.³ But it was all in vain; Tetzel, at once pursued by remorse of conscience, frightened at the reproaches of his best friends, and trembling under the wrath of the pope, died miserably some

¹ Verbis minisque pontificiis ita fregit hominem, hactenus terribilem cunctis et imperterritum Stentorem. (L. Opp. in Praef.)

² Doleo Tetzelium. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 223.)

³ How amiably does the genuine Christian's character shine forth here. No ignoble love of revenge occupies his heart; no malignant joy at the mental sufferings of his enemy, though these sufferings were caused by that enemy's own perversity, but a sympathetic interest that inclines him to assuage the wound and in order to that, holds out the fraternal hand of love and consolation. Such was Luther's behaviour towards Tetzel, and in this did he show himself to be a genuine Christian. Thus did it appear that he had regarded him not so much as a personal antagonist as a foe to the truth, and, indeed, of that very truth that contained the only source of consolation for Tetzel himself.—L. R.



Alfonso de E.

1800

time after. His death was thought to have been caused by a broken heart.¹

Faithful to the promises he had made to Miltitz, Luther, on the 3d of March, addressed the following letter to the pope:

"Most blessed Father! may it please your beatitude to incline your paternal ears, which are like those of Christ himself, towards your poor sheep and to hearken kindly to its bleating. What shall I do, most holy Father? I cannot endure the fierceness of your wrath, yet I know not how to escape from it. I am asked to retract. I should hasten to do so, could it effect the end in view. But the persecutions of my adversaries have diffused my writings far and wide, and they are too deeply engraven in mens' minds to make it possible to remove the impression. A retractation could but serve still further to dishonour the Church of Rome, and would fill every mouth with a cry of accusation against her. Most holy Father! I declare in the presence of God and of all his creatures; that never have I wished, nor do I now wish, to do prejudice, by force or fraud, to the power of the Roman Church, or to that of your holiness. I acknowledge that nothing, either in heaven or in earth, ought to be ranked above that church, unless it be Jesus Christ, the Lord of all."²

These words in the mouth of Luther, may seem strange and even reprehensible, did we not bear in mind that he came to the light, not all at once, but slowly and gradually. They demonstrate the very important fact, that the Reformation was no mere opposition to the popedom; that it was not any hostility to this or that particular form, or any merely negative tendency that produced it; that the opposition to the pope was a matter of secondary moment; but that its generating principle was a new life—a positive doctrine. "Jesus Christ, Lord of all, and who ought to be preferred to all," even to Rome herself, as says Luther at the close of his letter, such was the essential cause of the revolution of the sixteenth century.

It is not unlikely that some time before this, the pope would not have suffered to pass unnoticed a letter in which the Wittenberg monk flatly refused all retractation. But Maximilian

¹ Sed conscientia indignitate Papæ forte occubuit. (L. Opp. in Præf.)

² Præter unum Jesum Christum, Dominum omnium. (L. Epp. i. p. 234.)

was now dead; people were occupied about the choice of his successor, and Luther's letter was thrown aside amid the political intrigues by which the city of the pontiff was agitated.

The Reformer made better use of his time than his powerful adversary. While Leo X, engrossed with matters that concerned him as a secular prince, was doing his utmost to prevent a neighbour whom he dreaded, from occupying the imperial throne, Luther was daily advancing in knowledge and in faith. He studied the decretals of the popes, and his ideas became greatly modified in the course of his discoveries. "I am reading the decretals of the pontiffs," he writes to Spalatin, "and (let me whisper in your ear) am not sure whether the pope be Antichrist himself, or only his apostle; to such a degree has Christ been perverted and sacrificed."¹

He continued, notwithstanding, to regard the ancient Church of Rome with esteem, and had no thoughts of separating from it. "Let the Roman Church," he says, in the explanatory statement he had promised to Miltitz to publish, "be honoured of God above all the others; this is what we cannot doubt. St. Peter, St. Paul, forty-six popes, and some hundred thousands of martyrs shed their blood in the midst of her, and triumphed in her over hell and the world, so that God has a special regard for her. Although all things are now to be found there in a sad enough condition, this is no motive for separation. On the contrary, the worse matters are with her, the more ought we to abide by her, since she never can be improved by separation. God must not be abandoned on account of the devil, nor must we forsake the children of God who are to be found in Rome, because of the multitude of the wicked there. There is no sin or evil which should destroy charity or break unity. For charity can do all things, and nothing is hard to be accomplished by unity."^{2 3}

¹ Nescio an Papa sit Antichristus ipse vel apostolus ejus. (L. Epp. i. 239.)

² L. Opp. L. xvii. 224.

³ Such was Luther's own love of unity. He never recklessly infringed it. He infringed it not on account of any external arrangement, such as he either may have thought desirable otherwise, or which did not accord with his views. He did not even depreciate the papal supremacy as long as popes shed their blood in the cause of the truth or in any other way stood in its defence. But he neither could nor should have maintained a mere external and apparent unity at the cost of the truth and to the confirmation of error; neither can we do so: it is directly contrary to the purpose of *Jesus*, who prayed indeed: "Father that they may be one, even as we are one," but also: "Sanctify them through thy

It was not Luther that withdrew from Rome; it was Rome that withdrew from Luther, and, in doing so, rejected the ancient faith of the catholic Church which it then represented. It was not Luther that deprived Rome of her might and that made her bishop descend from his usurped throne; the power that had been enslaving the Church for ages could be overcome by nothing short of the doctrines he preached,—the word of the apostles which God was manifesting anew to the universal Church, with great power and in admirable purity.

These declarations of Luther, published towards the close of February, did not yet satisfy Miltitz and de Vio. Those two vultures, after having both missed their prey, had retired within the ancient walls of Treves, and there hoped with the aid of the prince arch-bishop, to accomplish together what each singly had failed to effect. The two nuntios perceived that they could expect nothing from Frederick, now that he was invested with the supreme power of the empire. They saw that Luther persisted in his resolution to make no retractation. Their only means of success, therefore, lay in inveigling the heretical monk from under the elector's protection into their own hands, knowing that, let him once come to Treves, situate in a state subject to a prince of the Church, he would be a clever person, indeed, were he to get away from it without having first fully satisfied the demands of the sovereign pontiff. They forthwith set themselves to work. "Luther," said Miltitz to the elector-arch-bishop of Treves, "has consented to your Grace being arbiter. Summon him then before you." The elector of Treves wrote, accordingly, on the third of May, to the elector of Saxony, begging that he would send Luther to him. De Vio, and after him Miltitz himself, wrote also to Frederick, to inform him that the golden rose had arrived at Augsburg and was with the Fuggers. Now, thought they, is the moment for striking the decisive blow.

But the case was now altered; neither Frederick nor Luther allowed themselves to be shaken. The elector understood the advantages of his new position; he no longer dreaded the pope; still less did he dread the pope's servants. On seeing the coalition of Miltitz with de Vio, the Reformer could guess the

truth; thy word is truth." He, therefore, who departs from the truth, he it is alone that infringes unity.—L. R.

fate that awaited him, should he comply with their call. "I perceive," said he, "that every where, on all sides, and by every means, men would take my life."¹ Besides, he was waiting for the decision of the pope, and the pope, wholly occupied about crowns and with intrigues, spoke not a word. Luther wrote to Miltitz: "How could I venture to leave this amid the commotions that now agitate the empire, without an order from Rome? How face so many dangers, and involve myself in so much expense: I, who am the poorest among men?"

The elector of Treves, a man of wisdom and moderation, and friendly to Frederick, was unwilling to press him hard; and, besides, had no wish to interfere without a special call to that effect. He arranged, accordingly, with the elector of Saxony, that further inquiry into the subject should be put off till the approaching diet, and that was not convened till two years after, at Worms.

While the hand of Providence was thus warding off one danger after another that threatened Luther, the Reformer was courageously advancing towards an object unknown as yet to himself. His reputation was increasing; the cause of truth was gaining strength; the number of students at Wittenberg was augmenting, and among these were to be found some of the most distinguished youths of Germany. "Our city," wrote Luther, "can hardly receive all who arrive here;" and on another occasion; "the number of students is increasing beyond measure, like a stream that overflows its banks."²

But by this time it was not in Germany alone that the Reformer's voice was making itself heard. It had passed the frontiers of the empire, and throughout the various nations of Christendom it was beginning to unsettle the very foundations of Roman authority. Frobenius, the famous printer at Basel, had published a collection of Luther's works, which began to have a rapid sale. At that city the very bishop himself applauded Luther, and the cardinal of Sion, after perusing his works, somewhat ironically exclaimed with a play upon his name: "O Luther, thou art indeed a Luther!" (indeed a purifier, *Lauterer*).

¹ Video ubique, undique, quocumque modo, animam meam quæri. (L. Epp. i. 274. 16th May.)

² Sicut aqua inundans. (L. Epp. i. p. 278 and 279.)

Erasmus was at Louvain when Luther's works reached the Netherlands. They were read with avidity by several Belgians, and, in particular, by the prior of the Augustinian monks at Antwerp, who had been a student at Wittenberg, and who, according to the testimony of Erasmus, was a man of true primitive Christianity. "But they who looked only to their own interests," said the Rotterdam sage, "and who fed the people with old women's tales, gave utterance to a gloomy fanaticism." "I cannot tell you," writes Erasmus to Luther, "what tragedies have been caused here by your writings."¹

Frobenius sent six hundred copies of these works into France and Spain. They were publicly sold in Paris, and the doctors of the Sorbonne read them then, it would appear, with approbation; it being high time, as some of them said, that persons occupied with sacred literature should speak out with such freedom. They were received in England with still greater eagerness. Spanish merchants got them translated into their country's language and sent from Antwerp into Spain. "Those merchants must surely have been of Moorish blood," says Pallavicini.²

Calvi, a learned bookseller of Pavia, took many copies into Italy, and dispersed them among all the cities beyond the Alps; not from a love of gain, but from the desire felt by this learned person to contribute towards the revival of piety. The energy with which Luther maintained the cause of Christ, delighted him. "All the learned men of Italy," he wrote, "will unite with me, and we will send you verses composed by our most distinguished writers."

On sending Luther a copy of this publication, Frobenius related to him all this gladdening intelligence, and added: "I have sold all the copies but ten, and never have had so successful an undertaking." Other letters besides these, informed Luther of the satisfaction afforded by his works: "I am delighted," says he, "to find that the truth is so gratifying, even when it speaks so barbarously, and with so small an amount of learning."^{3 4}

¹ Nullo sermone consequi queam, quas tragedias hic excitarent tui libelli.
 . . . (Erasm. Epp. vi. 4.)

² Maurorum stirpe prognatis. (Pallav. i. 91.)

³ In his id gaudeo, quod veritas tam barbare et indocto loquens, adeo placet.
 (L. Epp. i. 255.)

⁴ The author's account of the popularity of Luther's publications is thus

Thus did the revival commence in the various countries of Europe. If we except Switzerland, where the preaching of the Gospel had already made some progress, the history of the Reformation may everywhere be said to date from the arrival of the writings of the Wittemberg doctor. A Basel printer was the first to disseminate these first germs of the truth. At the very time the Roman pontiff thought to stifle the work in Germany, we find it beginning in France, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, England, and Switzerland. What though Rome should crush the parent stem? . . . the seeds are already dispersed far and wide. ¹

confirmed by M. Michelet. "At Nuremberg, at Strasburg, even at Maintz, his (Luther's) smallest pamphlets were seized with avidity. The sheet, wet from the press, was slipped under the cloak and passed from shop to shop." . . . "Nothing seconded Luther more powerfully than the zeal of printers and booksellers for new ideas." "Books in his favour," says a contemporary, "were printed by the typographers with minute attention, often at their own cost, and in large editions. A crowd of old monks who had returned to the world, lived on Luther's writings, and hawked them about Germany. The (Roman) Catholics could print their books only by paying the cost, and when printed, these were so full of blunders as to seem done by ignoramuses and barbarians. If any printer was conscientious enough to bestow more pains on them, he was teased and ridiculed at all the public markets and at the Frankfort fairs, as a papist and slave of the priests." *Michelet. Mem. de Luther, vol. i. p. 64.* It is to be regretted that M. Michelet does not name his authorities. TR.

¹ The precise period at which Luther's writings first found their way into Scotland, cannot now be well ascertained. In a memoir of the Scotch proto-martyr in the case of the Reformation, drawn up for "The Apprentices' Sabbath Friend," I had occasion to state as follows: "The mind of Hamilton seems first to have been led to suspect that all was not right in the doctrines and practices of the church in which he was to be a minister, at the age of twenty-two. Although no direct evidences exist in proof of the supposition, there seems little doubt that these impressions were made by the perusal of some of Luther's writings. A professor, such as Major, who had lived as a teacher in the learned society of Paris, and was well known and highly esteemed as a logician and divine on the continent, must have felt some curiosity to see the works of an author then making such a commotion in the Church, and had easy opportunities of obtaining them through traders plying between the Scotch and German ports; but supposing that he had obtained any of these for the gratification of his own curiosity, what more natural than that he should have indulged with their perusal a pupil distinguished by high rank, and assiduous and successful attention to his master's instructions? Certain it is that in 1525, an act was passed in the Scotch Parliament prohibiting Luther's writings from being brought into the country, as having hitherto been 'cleane of all sic filth and vice,' and that in 1526, Hamilton left St. Andrews and went straight to Wittemberg, for the express purpose of visiting the man whose works were thus stigmatized and forbidden admission into the kingdom. The inference, therefore, seems irresistible that these writings had been seen by this highly gifted youth, and had produced an effect on one so nearly allied to the royal family and who might one day come to possess the throne, which alarmed the court; that the act just mentioned was but one of several measures taken to prevent farther mischief; resenting which, Hamilton resolved to learn from the Reformer's own mouth and library what his real views were, in spite of the opposition of prejudiced and interested persons at home." TR.

II. While the conflict was thus commencing beyond the bounds of the Empire, it seemed almost to cease within them. The Franciscan friars of Jüterbock, who were the fiercest of the soldiers of Rome, having imprudently attacked Luther, were reduced to instant silence by a vigorous reply from the Reformer. The pope's partizans held their peace; Tetzel was no longer on the field; Luther's friends conjured him not to prolong the struggle and he had promised to comply. The theses were beginning to be forgotten. This treacherous peace palsied the eloquent tongue of the Reformer, and the Reformation itself seemed arrested in its course. "But," said Luther afterwards in speaking of this period, "the people imagined vain things, for the Lord awoke and arose to judge the nations."¹ "God does not guide me," he says elsewhere, "he urges—he drives me along. I am no longer master of myself. I would fain live in peace; but lo, I am hurried into the midst of tumults."^{2 3}

The contest was resumed by Eck, the schoolman, Luther's former friend, and the author of the *Obelisks*. He was sincere in his attachment to the popedom, but, apparently without any genuine religious feelings, he seems to have belonged to that, at all times too numerous class of men, who regard learning, and even theology and religion, as the means of gaining a reputation in the world. Vain glory can conceal itself beneath the pastor's gown as well as the warrior's armour. Eck had studied the art of disputation according to the rules of the schoolmen, and was considered a master in this kind of wrestling. While the knights of the middle ages and the warriors of the Reformation period, sought renown at tournaments, the schoolmen sought it in those syllogistic disputations of which the academies were often the scene. Self-confident in the extreme, proud of his talents, of the popularity of his cause and of the triumphs he had won in eight universities of Hungary, Lombardy and Germany, Eck eagerly

¹ Dominus exigilavit et stat ad judicandos populos. (L. Opp. lat. in Præf.)

² Deus rapuit, pellit, nedum ducit me; non sum compos mei: volo esse quietus et rapior in medios tumultus. (L. Epp. i. 231.)

³ Consequently, the Reformation was not Luther's work but that of God. Luther was urged, against his own inclination and by an invisible power, to undertake that work, yes, and directed in it also. Men may choose to call that a devilish power by which the career of wickedness was stayed, the deep corruption even of the Romish Church restrained, and the truth exhibited in a new and a clear light; but let them beware lest they thereby blaspheme the evident work of a better, even of the *Holy Spirit*.—L. R.

coveted an opportunity of displaying his power and address in a contest with the Reformer. This *petty monk* who had grown at once into a giant, this Luther whom none as yet could vanquish, offended his pride and excited his jealousy.¹ It is possible that in pursuing his own glory, Eck may ruin Rome. . . . But scholastic vanity does not allow itself to be checked by such considerations, and theologians no less than princes, have contrived to sacrifice, in more than one instance, the general interest to their individual renown. Let us now see what were the circumstances that furnished the Ingolstadt doctor with an opportunity of entering the lists with this rival that so annoyed him.

The zealous but over-ardent Carlstadt still kept terms with Luther. These two divines found their chief bond of union in their common attachment to the doctrine of grace, and admiration of St. Augustine. Carlstadt, tinctured with enthusiasm, and gifted with but a moderate share of prudence, was not a person to be checked in his course by the address and the policy of a Miltitz. He had published certain propositions impugning the *Obelisks* of Dr. Eck, and in these had defended Luther and their common faith. Eck had replied and Carlstadt had not left him the last word.² The controversy grew warmer and warmer. Eck, in his eagerness to catch so favourable an opportunity, had thrown down the gauntlet to Carlstadt, and the impetuous Carlstadt had taken it up. God employed the passions of both in accomplishing his purposes. Luther had taken no part in these debates, and yet he was destined to become the hero of the battle. There are men whom the force of circumstances is continually bringing back upon the scene. It was agreed that Leipsick should be the place of discussion. Such was the origin of the Leipsick disputation—afterwards so celebrated.

Eck cared little enough about a controversy with Carlstadt, or even about overcoming him. Luther being the real object of his aim, he did his utmost to allure him into the field of battle, and with this view published thirteen theses,³ impugning the main doctrines at that time professed by the Reformer. The thirteenth ran thus:—"We deny that the Roman Church was

¹ Nihil cupiebat ardentius, quam sui specimen præbere in solemnî disputatione cum æmulo. (Pallavicini, tom i. p. 55.)

² Defensio adversus Eckii monomachiam.

³ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 242.

not raised above other Churches previous to the time of pope Sylvester; and we recognise him who has occupied the see of St. Peter, and who has had his faith, as in all times the successor of St. Peter and the vicar of Jesus Christ." Sylvester lived in the days of Constantine, the Great; Eck then, by this thesis, denied that the primacy enjoyed by Rome, had been bestowed upon it by that emperor.

Luther who had been led to consent, though not without scruple, to remain silent for the future, was greatly excited by the perusal of these propositions. He saw that he was himself the real object of attack, and felt that he could not honourably decline the contest. "This man," said he, "says that Carlstadt is his antagonist; meanwhile he falls upon me. But God reigns and He knows what may be the issue of this tragedy.¹ The question is about neither Dr. Eck nor me. God's purpose will be accomplished. Thanks to Eck, this affair which has been hitherto but a fight for amusement, will in the end prove serious, and will deal a fatal blow to the tyranny of Rome and of the Roman pontiff."

Rome herself broke the agreement. Nay more; in giving the signal for engaging anew, she made the contest turn upon a point not yet directly attacked by Luther. It was the primacy claimed by the pope that Dr. Eck signalled out to his opponents, and in this imitated the perilous example set by Tetzel!² Rome had called for the gladiator's blows, and if she left wounded limbs quivering on the scene of strife, it was in consequence of her having provoked the descent of his redoubtable arm upon her own head.

The papal supremacy once overthrown, the whole Roman scaffolding was sure to give way, and accordingly, the pope-dom was now very seriously threatened. Yet strange to say, neither Miltitz nor Cajetan interfered to prevent this new contest. Could they suppose that the Reformation would be vanquished, or were they smitten with the infatuation which so often hurries on the mighty to their destruction?

After having presented a rare example of moderation by preserving silence so long, Luther fearlessly replied to the challenge

¹ Sed Deus in medio deorum; ipse novit quid ex eâ tragœdiâ deducere voluerit (L. Epp. i. 230, 222.)

² See page 276.

of his antagonist, by immediately opposing new theses to those of Dr. Eck. The last ran thus: "By the wretched decretals of the Roman pontiffs, composed four hundred years ago, or even later, an attempt is made to prove the primacy of the Church of Rome; but arrayed against that primacy we find the authentic history of eleven hundred years, the plain statements of the Holy Scriptures, and the conclusions of the council of Nice—the holiest of all the councils."¹

"God knows," he at the same time writes to the elector of Saxony, "that it was my settled purpose to hold my peace, and that I was delighted to see this game come at last to a close. So faithfully have I observed the agreement concluded with the pope's commissioner, that I did not even reply to Sylvester Prierias, in spite of the insults of my adversaries and the counsels of my friends. But now Dr. Eck attacks me, and not me only, but the whole university of Wittemberg besides. I cannot suffer the truth to be thus rendered odious."^{2 3}

Luther wrote at the same time to Carlstadt: "I do not wish, excellent Andrew, that you should take part in this quarrel, for it is I who am the real object of attack. I gladly postpone my more serious occupations to amuse myself with these flatterers of the Roman pontiff."⁴ Next, apostrophising his opponent: "Now, then, my dear Eck," he shouts from Wittemberg to Ingolstadt, "be a brave man and gird thy sword on thy thigh, most mighty."⁵ Though I could not please thee as a mediator, I

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 245.

² L. Epp. i. p. 237.

³ Thus did the enemies of the truth, by their irrational measures, promote the progress of that truth. Truth's honest abettor, who is concerned only about her, not about his own interests, is scrupulous and cautious. He is slow in his movements, only following as God leads; in no case outruns events; and would rather keep behind them than advance with too forward a zeal. Yet the enemies of the truth, men devoted to their own honour and interest, or prepossessed with their own ideas, allow themselves to be hurried along by immoderate fear or jealousy: they give themselves no rest in withstanding the so much hated truth in every way. Thus do they stimulate the zeal of the cautious friend of truth, and oblige him to keep his ground, thereby, under God's government, to make their own downfall the more certain. Such was the case with Eck and Luther. Such will again be the case under the present revival of the truth, the more people oppose and would even seek by violence to suppress it.—L. R.

⁴ Gaudens et videns posthabeo istorum mea seria ludo. L. Epp. i. p. 251.

⁵ Esto vir fortis et accingere gladio tuo super femur tuum, potentissime! (Ibid.) This employment of language borrowed from one of the most sublime of the psalms, must be regarded as a sad instance of Luther's occasional indiscretion. T.R.

may possibly please thee better as an antagonist. Not that I have any intention of vanquishing thee, but because after the triumphs thou hast achieved in Hungary, Lombardy, and Bavaria, (if, at least, we are to believe thee) I will give thee an opportunity of obtaining the title of conqueror of Saxony and Misnia, so that thou shalt ever after be greeted by the glorious title of Augustus.”¹

Luther's friends did not all share in his courage, for up to that hour none had been able to withstand the sophisms of Dr. Eck. But what most of all inspired them with the liveliest alarm, was the subject of the quarrel: the primacy of the pope!

. . . How durst the poor monk of Wittenberg engage with that giant who for ages had overwhelmed all his enemies? The courtiers at the elector's palace were terror-struck; Spalatin, the confidant of the prince and the Reformer's intimate friend, felt extremely anxious; Frederick was ill at ease, this being a warfare for which even the sword of a knight of the Holy Sepulchre, that he had been armed with at Jerusalem, was all too weak. Luther alone remains unmoved. *The Lord*, thinks he, *will deliver him into my hands*. And he finds in the faith which animates himself wherewithal to fortify his friends:—“I beseech of you, my dear Spalatin,” says he, “do not allow yourself to be led away by your fears: you know well that if Christ were not for me, all that I have done down to this hour, must have caused my ruin. Further, has there not lately been a letter written from Italy to the chancellor of the Duke of Pomerania, that I have overthrown Rome, and that none knowing how to appease the tumult, it was proposed that I should be assailed, not according to the rules of justice, but by the Roman finesses (such are the terms that were employed), that is, in my mind, by poison, ambuscade, and assassination.

“I moderate myself, and from love for the elector and the university, keep many things in reserve which, were I elsewhere, I should employ as arms against Babylon. O my dear Spalatin! we cannot speak truly of Scripture and of the Church without irritating the beast. Never hope then to see me at peace, at least as long as I meddle with theology. If this matter be from

¹ *Ac si voles semper Augustus saluteris in æternum.* (Ibid. p. 251.)

God, it will not come to a close until all my friends have forsaken me, as all his disciples forsook Christ. The truth will remain alone, and will triumph by its own right arm—not by mine, or by yours, or by that of any man.¹ Should I give way, all the world will not perish with me. But, wretch that I am, I fear I may be unworthy to die in such a cause.” “Rome,” he further writes about the same time, “Rome is burning with the desire of destroying me, and as for me, I bite my lips with impatience to show how I can laugh at her. I am assured that a paper Martin Luther, after being loaded with execrations, has been publicly burnt at Rome in the field of Flora. I anticipate their being furious.”² “The whole world,” he continues, “is agitated and convulsed; what will be the result? God knows. As for me I foresee wars and disasters. May God pity us!”³

Luther wrote letter after letter to duke George,⁴ to induce that prince, as Leipsick lay within his territories, to permit him to go there and take part in the disputation; but he received no reply. The grandson of Podiebrad,⁵ king of Bohemia, frightened by Luther’s proposition on the authority of the pope, and dreading lest Saxony should become the scene of wars such as had long been waged in Bohemia, would not consent to the doctor’s request. The latter resolved, accordingly, to publish explanations on that thirteenth thesis. Far, however, from convincing duke George, these, on the contrary, confirmed him in his resolution. He absolutely refused the Reformer’s request, and allowed him to appear at the combat as a simple spectator only.⁶ This was a great disappointment to Luther; nevertheless he had but one

¹ Et sola sit veritas quæ salvet se dextera suâ, non. meâ, non tuâ, non ullius hominis. . . . (L. Epp. i. 261.)

² Expecto furorem illorum. (Ibid. 280, dated 30th May, 1519.)

³ Totus orbis nutat et movetur, tam corpore quam anima. (Ibid.)

⁴ Ternis literis, a duce Georgio non potui certum obtinere responsum. (Ibid. p. 282.)

⁵ George Podiebrad, called by the Bohemians, first to the administration of that kingdom, and afterwards, on the death of Ladislaus, in 1458, to the crown, was grandfather on the mother’s side to duke George of Saxony. Because he favoured the Hussites, pope Paul II. in 1466, put him under the ban, and even preached a crusade against him, by which many were excited to take up arms against him, but having no proper leader, were easily put down. His grandson duke George of Saxony, in Luther’s time, foreseeing that he might be exposed to like evils, was the less disposed to make himself suspected of favouring Luther’s cause, for which, besides that, he had no liking.—L. R.

⁶ Ita ut non disputator sed spectator futurus Lipsiam ingrederer. (L. Opp. in Præf.)

wish, and that was to obey God; accordingly he resolved to go, to look on, and to wait the result.

The prince at the same time did every thing in his power to promote the disputation between Eck and Carlstadt. George was devoted to the old doctrine, but he was honest and sincere; he was a friend also to free inquiry, and did not think that any opinion should be charged with heresy, simply from its displeasing the court of Rome. Besides this, the elector strongly pressed the matter upon his cousin, so that, confirmed in his purpose by Frederick's words to him, George gave orders for the disputation taking place. ¹

Bishop Adolphus, of Merseburg, the diocese in which Leipsick was situate, understood better than Miltitz and Cajetan the risk incurred by committing questions of so much importance to the chances of a single combat. Rome, in fact, could not afford to expose the fruit of so many centuries of toil to any such hazard. Sharing their bishop's alarm, the divines of Leipsick besought him to prevent the disputation; he accordingly made the most energetic representations on the subject to duke George. To these the duke with great good sense replied: "I wonder to see a bishop entertain such an abhorrence for the ancient and praiseworthy custom which our forefathers had of examining doubtful points in matters of faith. If your theologians decline the defence of their doctrines, better that the money they get were bestowed in providing for old women and children, who at least can spin and sing." ²

This letter made no great impression on the bishop and his divines. Error has a secret conscience which makes her dread being examined, even when she talks loudest about free inquiry. After incautiously advancing, she makes a cowardly retreat. Truth does not challenge, but she keeps her ground. Error challenges and flies. Besides, the prosperous state of the university of Wittemberg excited the jealousy of that of Leipsick. The monks and priests of Leipsick entreated the people from the pulpits to shun the new heretics, and in their eagerness to inflame the fanaticism of the ignorant against the doctors of the Reformation.

¹ Principis nostri verbo firmatus. (L. Epp. i. 255.)

² Schneider. Lips. Chr. iv. 168.

mation, they loaded Luther with abuse, and depicted him and his friends in the blackest colours.¹ Tetzel, still alive, roused himself at the news, and exclaimed from his retreat: "It is the devil that is urging people to this conflict!"²

All the Leipsick professors, however, did not entertain such sentiments. Some belonged to the class of the indifferent, who are always ready to smile at the faults of both parties, and of this number was the professor of Greek, Peter Mosellanus. He cared little enough about John Eck, Carlstadt, or Martin Luther, but promised himself no small amusement from their encounter. "John Eck, the most illustrious of the gladiators of the pen and of rhodomontades," he wrote to his friend Erasmus, "John Eck who, like Socrates in Aristophanes, despises the very gods themselves, is about to oppose Andrew Carlstadt in a disputation. There will be much noise at the close of the battle. Ten Democrituses would find matter in it to laugh at."³

The fearful Erasmus, on the other hand, was dismayed at the thought of a contest, and his timid prudence would fain have laid an arrest on the disputation. "If you would be persuaded by Erasmus," he wrote to Melancthon, "you would apply more to the encouragement of good literature than to assailing its enemies."⁴ I am convinced that it is thus that we shall gain most ground. Above all, let us not forget, amid the battle, that it is not only by eloquence that we must overcome, but also by modesty and gentleness." But neither the alarms of the priests, nor the prudence of peacemakers, could now prevent the collision. Each party put his arms in order for the occasion.⁵

III. Eck was the first on the field. He entered Leipsick on June 21st, with Poliander, a youth whom he brought with him from Ingolstadt, to write an account of the disputation. All manner of honours was paid to the scholastic doctor. Arrayed in the robes of the priesthood and followed by a numerous procession, he traversed the streets of the city on the day of the

¹ *Theologi interim me proscindunt. . . . populum Lipsiæ inclamant.* (L. Epp. i. 255.)

² *Das walt der Teufel!* (Ibid.)

³ *Seckend.* p. 201.

⁴ *Malim te plus operæ sumere in asserendis bonis litteris, quam in sectandis harum hostibus.* (Corpus Reform. ed. Bretschneider. i. 78, of 22d Apr. 1519.)

⁵ Such prudent persons always injure the cause of truth. Had the counsel of Erasmus been listened to, men would all have remained with the Church of

festival in honour of God.¹ All pressed to have a glimpse of him. He himself states that the inhabitants were all on his side, "and yet," says he, "it was rumoured through the whole city, that I should be beaten in the contest."

The Wittembergers made their appearance on the day following the festival, being Friday, June 24, and also St. John's day. Carlstadt, who was to oppose doctor Eck, sat alone in his carriage, and preceded all the rest. Then came, in an open chariot, duke Barnim of Pomerania, at that time a student at Wittemberg, and who had been chosen rector of the university, while, one on each side of him, were seated the two great theologians, the

Rome, and like him would, from love of peace, have renounced or concealed their better views, and mingled them with error. *Modesty* and *meekness* are words that sound well. We ourselves remarked in a previous note (p. 416.) that "truth's honest abettor is scrupulous and cautious:"—yet meekness must not be made a pretence for indulging the fear of man. At the proper season, yet still following the divine guidance, we must both speak and act. Even those who go about solely intent on securing the triumph of their own plans, secretly acknowledge this, and in their own conscience are convinced that their only reason for commending what is called meekness, is that it leaves them to act without restraint.—L. R.

¹ *Fête Dieu*, or Corpus Christi day. This festival is of singular origin. A nun in the thirteenth century dreamt that God Almighty complained to her that while all the saints had feast days set apart for them, He was quite neglected. This being communicated to the bishop of the diocese, was made the subject of a representation at Rome, which led pope Urban IV., followed by Clement V., to appoint a special festival in honour of God. As the worship of God in spirit and in truth, however, was not to be expected from people grossly ignorant and idolatrous, a material and visible deity was found for them in the consecrated wafer, which they are taught to believe is the body, soul, and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. While the wafer is carried about under a splendid canopy, the streets and houses are expected to be adorned with flowers and hangings, and all persons that meet it, to fall down and worship. Since the Reformation, accordingly, it has been an occasion of hardly less danger to consistent Protestants than it is necessarily revolting to them. At Antwerp, in 1836, I found that most Protestants kept out of the way, conforming, however, in regard to ornamenting their houses. French Protestants have long been subject to particular annoyance and even danger on the occasion, and now view with dread the open return of public processions on the *Fête Dieu*, although prohibited by law. The *Esperance* of July 6th, 1841, gives the following account of the celebration of the festival at Toulon, from a correspondent writing in June:

"Toulon saw the processions close on the 20th current, after having lasted eight days. On the thirteenth night be seen a huge ox decked out with ribbons, &c. &c. Then followed some lambs and sheep covered with ornaments, and to a cross, above the image of Christ, there was attached by the feet with iron wire, a beautiful white pigeon with its head hanging down and its wings expanded. The poor creature, thus tortured, beat its wings violently in its endeavours to escape from the wires by which inhuman wretches had confined it, while persons of more sensibility could not but pity its sufferings. The processions were daily accompanied with those provincial instruments—the fife and tambourin, and for want of sacred music, profane airs were played."

May it not have been from an incipient dislike for the semi-pagan, or rather purely pagan, ceremonial of the *Fête Dieu*, that the Wittemberg doctors delayed their coming till the day following? Eck must have found himself in his element on that occasion amid scenes which would have revolted Luther. Tk.

fathers of the Reformation, Melancthon and Luther. Melancthon had felt unwilling to leave his friend. "Martin, the soldier of the Lord," he had said to Spalatin, "has stirred this fetid marsh.¹ I feel indignant when I think of the shameful conduct of the pope's divines. Be firm and abide with us." Luther himself had desired that his Achates, as he has been called, should accompany him.

John Lang, vicar of the Augustinians, several doctors of law, some masters of arts, two licentiates in theology, and other ecclesiastics, among whom was remarked Nicolas Amsdorf, closed the procession. Born of a noble family in Saxony, Amsdorf made little account of the brilliant career to which his birth might have called him, and consecrated himself to theology. The theses on indulgences had led him to the knowledge of the truth, and he had forthwith made a bold profession of faith.² Gifted with much strength of mind and vehemence of character, Amsdorf often urged Luther to acts that were perhaps imprudent, and into which the latter was prone enough to run, of his own accord. Placed by birth in the higher ranks, this friend of the Reformer was not afraid of the great, and addressed them at times with a freedom bordering on rudeness. "The Gospel of Jesus Christ," said he one day in the presence of a noble assembly, "belongs to the poor and the afflicted, and not to you, princes, lords, and courtiers, who live in the uninterrupted enjoyment of luxuries and delights."³

But this did not compose the whole of the retinue from Wittenberg. The students accompanied their masters thither in great numbers,—Eck alleged to the amount of two hundred. These were armed with pikes and halberts, and surrounded the carriages in which the doctors were seated, apparently resolved to defend them, and exulting in their cause.

Such was the order in which the train of the Reformers arrived at Leipsick. When it had passed the gate of Grimma and was in front of St. Paul's church-yard, one of the wheels of Carlstadt's carriage gave way, precipitating the arch-deacon into the

¹ Martinus, Domini miles, hanc camerinam movit. (Corp. Ref. i. 82.)

² Nec cum carne et sanguine diu contulit, sed statim palam ad alios, fidei confessionem constanter edidit. (Mel. Adam. Vita Amsdorf.)

³ Weissman. Hist. Eccl. i. p. 144.

mud, just as his vanity was enjoying the gratification of so solemn an entry. Though unhurt, he had to repair to his residence on foot, while Luther's carriage, which was immediately behind, shot a head in a moment, and bore the Reformer, safe and sound, to his lodgings. From this accident the people of Leipsick, who had gone in crowds to view the arrival of the Wittemberg champions, drew an unfavourable presage for Carlstadt; and it was soon concluded throughout the whole city that he would give way in the encounter, while Luther was to come off victorious.¹

Meanwhile, Adolphus of Merseburg was not idle. As soon as he heard of the approach of Luther and Carlstadt, and even before they had left their carriages, he caused an injunction against opening the disputation under pain of being excommunicated, to be affixed to all the church doors;² a piece of audacity which amazed duke George, by whose command the town council caused the bishop's placards to be torn down, and threw the person who had been so fool-hardy as to execute his order, into prison.³ In fact, George had himself come to Leipsick, attended by all his court, and among others by the same Jerome Emser with whom Luther had spent the famous evening at Dresden.⁴

George sent the combatants on both sides the usual presents.

¹ Seb. Fröschel vom Priesterthum. Wittemb. 1585. in Præf.

² We see, in this instance, how far the bishops carried their pretensions; publicly prohibiting, under pain of being put to the ban, a disputation permitted by the temporal prince. That they have not yet forgotten this, we learn from the history of our own day: yet what would be the result should they happen to find that they had to do with less resolute princes among Protestants than George of Saxony was among themselves—a man who in other respects wished to be considered an obedient son of their Church? True—as the people's spiritual guides, not bishops only, but all Christian teachers, should be free to exercise proper discipline in conformity with the Word of God, over such as transgress what that Word enjoins, and to make known the will of God unreservedly to all. But all this must be confined within the Church. Public measures, excommunications and threats of punishment, as from persons possessed of temporal authority, by no means become them, and must not be conceded to them even when fortified by the authority of the temporal prince. Men are apt, in this respect, to fall into one or other extreme. While, on the one hand, they impose excessive restraints on the powers of Protestant ministers, powers without which these cannot properly acquit themselves of their ministry, they strengthen by what are called *concordats* the powers of the Roman Catholic clergy. But see the unhappy results; the latter will not remain content with powers in any way limited; they become more and more bold and presuming, and would again as formerly govern all things according to their own views. Here we are reminded of the present archbishop of Cologne.—L. R. For the case of the archbishop of Cologne, see the London Quarterly Review. Tr.

³ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 245.

⁴ See page 205.

"The Duke," said Eck with no small exultation, "presented me with a fine stag, while he gave Carlstadt a roebuck only."¹

Eck had hardly heard of Luther's arrival when he waited upon the doctor.² "What now," says he, "I hear that you refuse to dispute with me!"

LUTHER.—"How can I dispute since the duke forbids me?"

ECK.—"If I am not to dispute with you, I care little about entering the lists with Carlstadt. It is to meet you that I have come hither."³ Then, after a moment's pause, he added: "If I procure permission from the duke, will you appear on the field of contest?"

LUTHER, joyfully.—"Get me leave, and we shall fight it out."

Forthwith Eck repaired to the duke, endeavoured to do away with his fears, represented that he was sure of success, and that the pope's authority, far from suffering by the disputation, would come out of it covered with glory; that the leading man must be the object of attack; that should Luther be allowed to stand, all would stand; should he fall, all would fall. George then granted the permission that was sought.

George had given instructions for preparing a large hall in his palace, called the Pleissenburg. Two pulpits were erected facing each other; tables were arranged for the notaries who were to take down the disputation in writing, and there were benches for the spectators, both pulpits and benches being covered with beautiful tapestry. From the Wittemberg doctor's pulpit there was suspended the portrait of St. Martin, whose name he bore, while from that of Dr. Eck hung the portrait of the knight, St. George. "We shall see," said Eck as he surveyed that emblem, "whether I do not ride down my enemies." Everything bespoke the importance that was attached to the struggle.

A meeting was convened at the palace on June 25th, for the purpose of settling the order that was to be followed; and on this occasion Eck, trusting more to his declamations and his gestures than to his arguments, exclaimed: "We shall dispute freely and copiously; and there must be no taking down in writing by notaries of what is said."

¹ Seck. p. 190.

² Milner makes this to have occurred some days later. Tr.

³ Si tecum non licet disputare, neque cum Carlstatio volo; propter te enim huc veni. (L. Opp. in Præf.)

CARLSTADT.—“It has been agreed that the disputation shall be written out, published, and submitted to the judgment of all men.”

ECK.—“To write down all that is spoken is but to take the edge off the minds of the combatants, and to drag out the controversy. It is all over then with the freshness and energy required for an animated disputation. Do not check the torrent of words.”¹

Doctor Eck's friends supported his request, but as Carlstadt persisted in his objections the champion of Rome had to yield.

ECK.—“Be it so; it shall be written out; but at least the disputation, as written out by the notaries, shall not be published until first submitted to the examination of certain judges.”

LUTHER.—“Then the truth of Dr. Eck and the Eckians, dreads the light?”

ECK.—“There must be judges!”

LUTHER.—“And what judges?”

ECK.—“At the close of the disputation we shall come to an understanding on that point.”

It may clearly be seen what was aimed at by the partisans of Rome. If the Wittenberg theologians accepted judges, they were ruined, their opponents being sure beforehand of those who would be applied to: while, should they refuse, they would be exposed to the disgrace of having it everywhere reported that they dreaded the award of impartial judges.

The Reformers desired to have for judges, not such or such individuals whose minds were previously made up on the subject, but the whole of Christendom. They appealed to the voices of the world at large, and should these go against them, it was well at least that while pleading in the presence of the general body of Christians, they might lead some souls to the light. “Luther,” says an historian, “would submit the case to the judgment of all the faithful, that is, to a court where the votes were so numerous that no urn could be found large enough to contain them all.”²

The meeting then broke up. “See how cunning they are,”

¹ Melanct. Opp. i. p. 139. (Koethe ed.)

² Aiebat, ad universos mortales pertinere iudicium, hoc est ad tribunal cujus colligendis calculis nulla urna satis capax. (Pallavicini, t. i. p. 55.)

said Luther and his friends to each other. "They would, no doubt, have the pope or the universities for judges."

The Roman theologians sent one of their people next morning to Luther, charged to propose to him that the judge should be the pope! . . . "The pope!" said Luther, "how can I consent to him?" . . .

"Beware," exclaimed all his friends, "of accepting such unfair terms." Eck and his people consulted anew. They gave up the idea of appointing the pope, and proposed some of the universities. "Don't deprive us of the liberty you have hitherto accorded us," replied Luther.—"We cannot yield to you upon this point," they replied.—"Very well!" said Luther, "then I will not dispute."¹

They separated, and the whole city now began to talk over what had passed. Luther, cried the Romanists everywhere exultingly, Luther does not wish to accept the challenge! . . . He does not wish to acknowledge any judge! . . . His words were commented upon and twisted, everything being done to put the most unfavourable construction possible upon them. "What! indeed! so he refuses the disputation?" said the Reformer's best friends. These went to see him, and told him their alarms. "You refuse the encounter!" they exclaimed. "Your refusal is sure to reflect everlasting disgrace on your university and your cause." This was to attack Luther in the most tender part.—"Well then," he replied with a heart swelling with indignation, "I accept the conditions imposed on me, but I reserve the right of appeal, and object to the court of Rome."²

IV. The 27th of June was fixed for the opening of the disputation. Early on the morning of that day the parties began to assemble in the grand college of the university, whence they repaired in procession to St. Thomas's Church, and there a solemn mass was performed by orders from the duke and at his expense. When the service was over, the parties present went in procession to the ducal castle. At their head appeared duke George and the duke of Pomerania; next came the counts, abbots, knights, and other persons of distinction; last followed the doctors of both parties. The train was attended by a guard

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 245.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii.

composed of seventy-six burgesses, armed with halberds, with flags flying, and to the sound of martial music. The procession stopt at the castle gate.

On arriving at the palace, each took his place in the hall appointed for the disputation. Duke George, the hereditary prince John, prince George of Anhalt, a boy of twelve, and the duke of Pomerania, occupied the seats that had been set apart for them.

Mosellanus entered the pulpit to remind the theologians, by orders from the duke, in what manner the disputation ought to be conducted. "If you run into violent altercations," said the speaker, "what difference will there be between a theologian who disputes and an impudent bully? In what does the victory consist here but in recalling a brother from error? . . . It would seem that each ought to desire rather to be beaten than to conquer."¹

At the close of this address, sacred music resounded from the vaulted roofs of the Pleissenburg; all present knelt down, and the ancient hymn for the invocation of the Holy Spirit, *Veni, Sancte Spiritus!* was chanted. What a solemn hour was this in the annals of the Reformation! Thrice was the call repeated, and as that grave melody fell upon their ears, there knelt, in one mingled body, the defenders of the old doctrine and the champions of the new; the men of the Church of the middle age and they who sought to restore the Church of the Apostles; all with their faces bowed to the ground. The ancient tie of one sole communion still united all these various minds in one fellowship: the same prayer went up from all their lips, as if uttered by one heart.

These were the last moments of the outward unity—of the dead unity; and now a new unity of spirit and of life was about to commence. The Holy Spirit was invoked upon the Church, and the Holy Spirit was to respond to that call, by coming down and renovating Christendom.

When prayer and singing had concluded, the assembly rose, and the disputation was to have begun; but the clock having struck twelve, it was put off till two.

The duke had invited to his table the chief personages who proposed being present at the debate, and when the repast was

¹ Seckend. p. 209

over they all returned to the castle. The hall was full of spectators, for disputations of the kind formed the great public meetings of that age, and it was at these that the representatives of the opinions of the day discussed such questions as engrossed all men's minds. Ere long the speakers were at their posts, and that the reader may form the better idea of them we shall give their likenesses, as traced by one of the most impartial witnesses of the contest.

"Martin Luther is of the middle size, and has become so lean from the intensity of his studies that you might almost count his bones. He is in the prime of life and has a clear and sonorous voice. His learning, and his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, are incomparable; so that he has the whole word of God at his finger ends.¹ Besides this, he has a vast fund of arguments and ideas. It is to be desired, perhaps, that he had a little more judgment in putting everything in its proper place. In conversation he is candid and affable; has nothing stoical or haughty; he knows how to accommodate himself to the peculiarities of every one; his talk is pleasant and full of hearty good humour. He displays firmness, and has always the air of a man who is satisfied, whatever be the threats of his opponents; so that one is compelled to believe that it is not without God's help that he accomplishes such great things. He is blamed, nevertheless, for being a little more sarcastic in attacking others than becomes a divine, especially when he has new things to announce in regard to religion.

"Carlstadt is not so tall; he is of a dark and adust complexion; he has a disagreeable voice; his memory is not so exact as Luther's, and he is more apt to lose his temper. We find in him, notwithstanding, though in a less degree, the qualities that distinguish his friend.

"Eck is a tall man, broad shouldered, and with a strong and thoroughly German voice. He has good withers, so that he could make himself very well heard on the stage, and might even make an excellent public crier. His accentuation is thick rather than distinct, nor has he the grace so much commended by Fabius and Cicero. His mouth, eyes, and whole counte-

¹ Seine Gelehrsamkeit aber und Verstand in heiliger Schrift is unvergleichlich, so dass er fast alles im Griff hat. (Mosellanus in Seckend. 296.)

nance, give you the impression of a soldier, or butcher, more than of a divine.¹ His memory is excellent, and were his understanding equal to it, he would indeed be a perfect man. But he is slow of comprehension and is wanting in judgment, without which all other gifts are useless. Accordingly, in disputing, he heaps together passages upon passages from the Bible, quotations from the Fathers, and proofs of all sorts, without selection and without discernment. Moreover, he is a man of inconceivable impudence. If he find himself embarrassed, he leaves the point he is treating, pounces on some other, sometimes even lays hold of the opinion of his antagonist, and employing different expressions, attributes to his opponent, with extraordinary address, the very absurdity which he himself had been defending."

Such, according to Mosellanus, were the men who then drew the attention of the crowd which was eagerly pressing into the grand hall of the Pleissenburg. The disputation now commenced between Eck and Carlstadt.

Eck for some moments fixed his eyes on certain objects laid out on his rival's pulpit-desk, and which seemed to disquiet him: they consisted of the Bible and the holy Fathers. "I refuse to dispute," he exclaimed, "if you are allowed to bring books with you."² Strange indeed that a theologian should have recourse to his books in controversy! Eck's astonishment was still more astonishing. "It is the fig leaf with which this Adam would conceal his shame," said Luther; "Did not Augustine consult his books in combatting the Manicheans?"³ No matter? Eck's partisans raised a clamour. "This man has no memory," said Eck. It was settled at last, according to the desire of the chancellor of Ingolstadt, that each should avail himself of his powers of memory and speech only. "Thus then," said many, "we shall have to do, not with the investigation of truth in this disputation, but with encomiums on the memories and tongues of the combatants."

As we cannot relate the entire disputation, for it lasted seventeen days, we must, as an historian says, follow the example of painters, who when they would represent a battle,

¹ Das Maul, Augen und ganze Gesicht, presentirt ehe einen Fleischer oder Soldaten als einem Theologum. (Mosellanus in Seckend. 206.)

² Milner mentions this objection as made somewhat later. TR.

³ Prætexit tamen et hic Adam ille folium fici pulcherrimum (L. Epp. i. 294.)

place the most renowned feats of the field on the fore-ground and leave the rest in the distance.¹

The subject of the discussion between Eck and Carlstadt was important: "The will of man previous to conversion," said Carlstadt, "can do nothing good: every good work comes entirely and exclusively from God, who gives to man first the will to do it, and then the moral power to accomplish it." This truth had been announced by Holy Scripture which saith: *For it is God who worketh in you to will and to do according to his good pleasure,*² and by St. Augustine who, in his dispute with the Pelagians, had stated it nearly in the same terms. Every act that is wanting in love and obedience to God, is in his eyes divested of that which alone can render it truly good, however it might have been produced in other respects by the most honourable human motives. Now, there is in man a natural opposition to God which it is beyond man's ability to surmount. For this he has not the power; he has not even the will for this. It is what therefore must be done by divine power.

Such is the question, so much decried in the world, and yet so simple, of the freedom of the will. Such had been the doctrine of the Church. But the schoolmen had explained it in a manner that prevented its being recognised. No doubt, said they, the natural will of man can do nothing truly agreeable to God; but it can do much to render man more capable of receiving the grace of God, and more worthy of obtaining it. They called such preparatives a merit of congruity:³ "because it is *congruous*," said Thomas Aquinas, "that God should treat with altogether special favour the man who makes a good use of his own will." And as for the conversion which has to be wrought in man, it no doubt proceeded from the grace of God, who, according to the schoolmen, is the person who must accomplish it, yet without excluding man's natural powers. These powers, said they, have not been annihilated by sin: sin merely opposes an obstacle to their development; but as soon as that obstacle is removed (and there it was where, according to them, the grace of God had to intervene) the action of these powers recom-

¹ Pallavicini, i. 65.

² St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, ii. 13.

³ Meritum congruum.

mences. To use one of their favourite illustrations, the bird which has been for some time bound has neither lost the power nor forgotten the art of flying; but before it can again avail itself of its wings, a stranger hand must remove the bonds that prevent its flight. Thus it is, said they, with man.^{1 2}

Such was the question discussed by Eck and Carlstadt. It involved a subject on which the former seemed at first wholly opposed to the propositions held by his opponent, but, aware how difficult he should find it to maintain the ground he had chosen, he said: "I admit that the will has not the power to do a good work, and that it receives that power from God."—"Do you then acknowledge," asked Carlstadt, delighted at having obtained such a concession, "that a good work proceeds wholly from God?"—"Every good work proceeds, it is true, from God," was the subtile reply of the schoolman, "but not entirely so." "There," exclaimed Melancthon, "there's a windfall well worthy of theological science." "An apple," added Eck, "is all produced by the sun, but not totally and without the concurrence of the plant."³ Doubtless it never was maintained that an apple is wholly produced by the sun.

"Very well," said the opposite party then, with a deeper insight into a question at once so delicate, and so important both in philosophy and in religion, "let us now inquire how God acts in man, and how man comports himself while thus acted upon." "I own," said Eck, "that the first impulse in man's conversion comes from God, and that man's will therein is altogether passive."⁴ So far the two disputants were quite of one sentiment.

¹ Planck. i. p. 176.

² The grand question that meets us here is, whether the power to anything really good be natural or supernatural—that is, whether this can be accomplished through the ordinary motives suggested by man's self-love, provided only, that that self-love be properly directed, or if, in addition to that, higher and more spiritual incentives be required. According to the former hypothesis, self-love, in so far as it has been disordered by sin, is the imprisoned bird which has only to be let loose—delivered from that disorder—in order to take its unfettered flight towards some worthy object of desire. But the Reformers were not satisfied with this hypothesis. There is a higher and a nobler aim than the purest self-love will ever point out to us—even God himself—the sole worthy object of all our interest. For that a spiritual ability is required—an ability which has been killed by sin and must be brought to life again.—L. R.

³ Quamquam totum opus Dei sit, non tamen *totaliter* a Deo esse, quemadmodum totum pomum efficitur a sole, sed non a sole *totaliter* et sine plantæ efficientia. (Pallavicini, t. i. p. 58.)

⁴ Motionem seu inspirationem prevenientem esse a solo Deo; et ibi liberum arbitrium habet se passive.

"I admit," said Carlstadt on his side, "that after this first operation on the part of God, there must follow something on man's part, called by St. Paul *will*, and by the Fathers *consent*." And here again they were agreed, but at that point they diverged from each other. "This consent on man's part," said Eck, "proceeds partly from our natural will, partly from the grace of God."¹ "No," said Carlstadt, "for it must needs be that God wholly creates this will in man."² Thereupon Eck, astonished and incensed at hearing what was so much fitted to make a man feel his nothingness, exclaimed, "Your doctrine makes man to be a stone, or a log, incapable of any reaction!" . . . "How now!" replied the Reformers, the "capacity for receiving those powers produced in him by God, that capacity which, according to our view, man possesses, surely distinguishes him sufficiently from a stone or a log." . . . "But," rejoined their antagonists, "you put yourselves in contradiction with experience by refusing man all natural ability."—"We deny not," replied his adversaries, "that man possesses certain powers, and that he has the faculty of reflecting, meditating, and choosing. We consider these powers and faculties only as simple instruments, which can do nothing good until the hand of God puts them in motion. They are like the saw in the hand of the man who is using it."^{3 4}

Here the grand question concerning the freedom of the will was debated, and it was easy to demonstrate that the doctrine of the Reformers did not take from man the freedom of a moral agent, and did not make him a mere passive machine. The freedom of a moral agent consists in having the power to act according to its choice. Every action done without restraint from without, and in consequence of a determination on the part of the soul itself, is a free act. The soul is determined by motives: but it is matter of daily observation, that the same motives act differently on different souls; many persons not

¹ Partim a Deo, partim a libero arbitrio.

² Consentit homo, sed consensus est donum Dei. Consentire non est agere.

³ Ut serra in manu hominis trahentis.

⁴ Such is the fact; not that natural powers are altogether useless; they are, as it were, the instruments employed by the Spirit—the spiritual capacity: yet this spiritual capacity, which through sin is dead, must first be brought to life again by the Spirit of Christ—the Holy Ghost.—L. R.

acting conformably with motives, the whole force of which they nevertheless acknowledge. This inefficacy of motives proceeds from obstacles opposed to them by the corruption of the understanding and the heart. Now God, by giving man a new heart and mind, removes those obstacles, and in removing them, far from depriving man of his freedom, he, on the contrary, takes away what hindered man from acting freely, and from following the voice of his conscience;—according to the expression employed in the Gospel, he makes him “free indeed.” (John viii. 36.) ¹

A slight incident led to an interruption of the disputation. Carlstadt, we are told by Eck, ² had prepared sundry arguments beforehand, and like many speakers in our own days, read what he had written. In this Eck saw only a school-boy's trick and objected to it. Carlstadt felt embarrassed, and fearing that without his notes he might fall through his task, he insisted on retaining them. “Ah,” said the doctor of the school, exulting in the advantage he thought he had over him, “his memory is not equal to mine.” The matter was referred to umpires, who allowed quotations from the Fathers to be read, but beyond that the speaking was to be extemporaneous.

This first part of the disputation was often interrupted by the bye-standers, among whom there was much confusion and clamour. No sooner was a proposition announced that offended the ears of the majority than an uproar began, and then, as at the present day, there had to be a call for silence. The disputants themselves at times lost their tempers in the heat of debate.

Near Luther, and hardly less than him an object of general

¹ Thus are they coupled together. The bird is not only bound—it is wanting, too, in that spiritual strength which by nature it possesses not. On this being again imparted to a man, he lives spiritually, and aims at higher objects than mere self-love ever contemplates. And even then are the bands not altogether loosed; a second deliverance is still required, that self-love may be guided aright and freed from all the illusions of the senses. This deliverance doth the Son of God likewise provide for all who abide in his word and are thus his disciples indeed. This latter deliverance exclusively had the opponents of the Reformers in view, as if the former, that is, abiding in Jesus' Word, were in man's own power—whereas a prior, and indeed the grand deliverance, is required in order to that—even the entire restoration of life. Here we have the main difference which had previously distinguished, and still continues to distinguish, the Pelagians and Semi-pelagians from those who hold the pure truth.—L. R.

² Seckendorf, p. 192.

notice, sat Melanchthon. The slightness of his figure made him look like a youth of eighteen, yet with Luther, who was a full head taller, he seemed particularly intimate, the two friends coming in and going out together, and accompanying each other in their walks. "To look at Melanchthon," says a Swiss theologian who studied at Wittemberg,¹ "you would call him a boy; but in mind, learning, and talent, he is a giant; and it is incomprehensible how such depths of wisdom and genius should be inclosed in so small a body." In the intervals between the sittings, Melanchthon talked with Carlstadt and Luther, assisting them in their preparations, and suggesting arguments supplied from the resources of his vast erudition; but while the disputation was going on, he took his seat as a silent spectator among the rest, and attentively followed what the divines had to say.² Sometimes, however, he would come to Carlstadt's assistance when the latter was about to succumb beneath the powerful declamation of the chancellor of Ingolstadt, by suggesting a word or two in a whisper, or passing a slip of paper into his hands with a reply written out. This having once caught Eck's attention, indignant at this grammarian as he called him, interfering in the dispute, he turned to him and said in a haughty tone: "Hold your peace, you Philip there, mind your studies and don't annoy me."³ Luther was offended at this gross insult pointed against his friend. "I attach more weight," says he, "to the judgment of Philip, than to that of a thousand Dr. Ecks."

The calm mind of Melanchthon easily perceived what were the weak points in this discussion. "One can't but wonder," says he with the wisdom and the grace that marked all his words, "when he thinks of the violence that has been shown in treating of all these things. How was any good to be drawn from them? The Spirit of God loves retirement and silence: it is there that he enters into the hearts of men."⁴ The bride of

¹ John Kessler, afterwards reformer of St. Gall.

² *Lipsicæ pugnæ otiosus spectator in reliquo volgo sedi.* (Corpus Reformatorum i. 111.)

³ *Tace, tu, Philippe, ac tua studia cura, ne me perturba.* (Ibid. i. p. cxlix.)

⁴ One might suppose these sentiments to have suggested to Cowper his

Christ does not remain in the streets and crossings, but she conducts her bridegroom into her mother's house." ¹

Each party claimed the victory, and Eck exerted all his tact to make it appear that it lay on his side. As the points of divergence sometimes all but coincided, it often happened that he would loudly exult at having brought his opponent over to his opinion; or, like another Proteus, says Luther, he would wheel round all at once, would state Carlstadt's own view in other expressions, and then would ask him in a tone of triumph, if he did not find himself constrained to yield to him. . . . And simple people, who could not see through this sophist's trick, would applaud and triumph along with him! . . . Eck, nevertheless, without being conscious of it, in the course of the disputation conceded much more than he intended. His partizans laughed outright at all his clever hits: "but," says Luther, "I am much convinced that their laughter was forced, and that at heart it was a bitter vexation to them to see their chief, who had commenced the contest with so many bravados, abandon his flag, desert his army, and become a runaway." ²

Three or four days after the conference had commenced, the disputation was interrupted by the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul. On this occasion the duke of Pomerania requested that Luther would preach before him in his chapel, and this invitation Luther joyfully accepted. When the time, however, came, the chapel was so rapidly filled to overflowing that the congregation, which was constantly increasing, was transferred

beautiful hymn, beginning: "Far from the world, O Lord, I flee." In fact Melancthon's words are closely paraphrased in the two stanzas:

"The calm retreat—the silent shade,
With pray'r and praise agree;
And seem by thy sweet bounty made,
For those who follow thee.

There, if thy Spirit touch the soul,
And grace her mean abode,
Oh! with what peace, and joy, and love,
She communes with her God!"

We shall see hereafter, from Luther's experience at Wartburg, that retirement is not always so desirable, and that for the Christian the post of active duty is generally the safest and best. TR.

¹ Melanct. Opp. p. 134.

² Relictis signis, desertorem exercitus et transfugam factum. (L. Epp. i. 235.)

to the grand hall of the castle where the disputation was ordinarily held. Luther, adopting the text of the day, preached on the grace of God and the power of Peter, and took occasion, in the presence of a popular auditory, to expound the views he usually maintained before an assemblage consisting of the learned. Christianity pours the light of truth equally into minds of the highest order and into those of the humblest capacity; and in this it stands out in marked contrast with all other systems of religion and philosophy. Of course the Leipsick divines who heard Luther preach on this occasion, eagerly related to Eck the scandalous expressions with which he had offended their ears. "He must be answered," they exclaimed, "these subtile errors must have a public refutation." Eck wanted nothing more. All the churches were open to him, and four successive times he appeared in the pulpit to attack Luther and his sermon. Luther's friends were indignant; they insisted that the Wittemberg divine should be heard in his turn, but this they urged in vain. The pulpits were opened to the enemies of the evangelical doctrines; they were closed to them that preached them. "I held my peace," said Luther, "and had to bear being assailed, insulted, and slandered, without having it in my power to excuse or defend myself."¹

Nor did the ecclesiastics alone show this opposition to the evangelical doctrines. In this the Leipsick burgesses were at one with their clergy, and were impelled by a blind fanaticism to adopt the misrepresentations and antipathies that were eagerly propagated. Not only did their chief inhabitants refuse to visit Luther and Carlstadt, but they even passed them without notice in the streets, and endeavoured to blacken their characters in the regards of the prince, while with the Ingolstadt doctor, on the contrary, they were daily seen coming and going, and eating and drinking. They thought it enough to offer Luther the present of wine usually given to the combatants. Moreover, such as wished him well concealed their likings from others, several, like Nicodemus, coming to him at night or secretly. Two persons only did themselves honour by publicly declaring themselves his friends. These were Dr. Auerbach, whom we

¹ Mich verklagen, schelten und schmöhen. . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 247.)

have already had occasion to speak of as at Augsburg, and Dr. Pistor, the younger.

Such was the agitation that prevailed throughout the city, that the two parties formed as it were two hostile camps that at times encountered each other and fought. The Leipsick students on the one side, and those of Wittemberg on the other, were perpetually quarrelling in the inns. It was openly asserted, even at the meetings of the clergy, that Luther carried about with him a devil shut up in a small box. "Whether it be in the box that the devil is to be found, or only under his frock," said Eck maliciously, "I know not; but there is no doubt of its being in one of them."

Several doctors belonging to the two parties lodged during the disputation in the house of the printer Herbipolis, and there their feuds ran so high that their host was obliged to post a city-officer, armed with a halbert, at the head of the table, to keep the guests, in case of need, from personally attacking each other. One day, the seller of indulgences, Baumgartner, came to blows with a gentleman who befriended Luther, and allowed his passion to get so much the better of him that he expired. "I was one of the party that attended his funeral," says Froschel, who relates the fact.¹ In such wise did the fermentation in men's minds reveal itself, and then, as now, what was spoken in public meetings found an echo in the drawing-room and on the street.²

Duke George, strongly predisposed as he was in favour of Eck, did not display the same violent passions as his subjects. He invited Eck, Luther, and Carlstadt, all three, to dine with him; he even invited Luther to visit him in private, but soon let him see how much imbued he was with all the prejudices that had been studiously instilled into him. "By what you have written on the Lord's prayer," said the duke to him one

¹ Löschner, iii. 278.

² But this spirit was then directed to a different object from what it now pursues: then it appeared in defending superstition; now, in hailing infidelity, or at least a pretended free-thinking. But by whatever name we designate it, now as then, it is mere prejudice. In neither case have such as row with the stream, been diligent in research, or eager in inquiring after truth. They alone pursue the right course, and know whence they come and whither they are going, who in good earnest have besought the Lord to show them what is truth, whether among those who opposed superstition then, or those who are resisting infidelity and free-thinking now.—L. R.

day ill-humouredly, "you have led many consciences astray. There are persons who complain that they have been unable to say a single *Pater* for more than four days."

V. It was on the 4th of July that the debate commenced between Eck and Luther, and every thing seemed to indicate that it would prove keener and more decisive than that which was just concluded. Both combatants advanced into the field with the determination of laying down their arms only on victory being declared on the side of one or other of them. The whole world anxiously waited the result, for the subject of discussion was no less than the primacy of the pope. Christianity has two great opponents: hierarchism and rationalism. Rationalism in its application to the doctrine of man's moral powers, was attacked by the Reformation in the first part of the discussion at Leipsick. It was hierarchism, regarded in what is at once its crowning point and its foundation, the doctrine of the pope, which was to be impugned in the second. On the one hand there appeared Eck in defence of the established religion, and glorying in the disputations he had sustained, as a general in the army would boast of the battles he had won.¹ On the other hand Luther stood forth as a man who could look for nothing but persecutions and ignominy as the fruits he was to derive from the struggle, but who yet presented himself with a good conscience, with a firm resolution to sacrifice all in the cause of the truth, and with a soul that waited upon God in full confidence in his power to deliver him.

By seven in the morning both antagonists were seated at their posts, surrounded by a numerous and attentive assembly.

Luther rose, and as a precaution by no means unnecessary, he said in a modest tone,

"In the name of the Lord, Amen! I declare that the respect I feel for the sovereign pontiff, would have led me not to maintain this disputation, had I not been dragged into it by the excellent Dr. Eck."

Eck.—"In thy name, meek Jesus! before descending into the arena, I protest in your presence, ye magnificent Lords, that

¹ Faciebat hoc Eccius quia certam sibi gloriam propositam cernebat, propter propositionem meam, in qua negabam Papam esse jure divino caput Ecclesiæ: hic patuit ei campus magnus. (L. Opp. in Pref.)

all that I have to say I submit to the judgment of the first of all sees, and of the master who is seated there."

Then, after a momentary pause, Eck continued thus :

"There is in the Church of God a primacy proceeding from Christ himself. The Church militant has been settled according to the pattern of the Church triumphant. Now, the latter is a monarchy where all rises hierarchically until we reach the sole chief who is God himself. Therefore is it that Christ hath established a like order of things on the earth. What a monster were the Church without a head!"¹ . . .

Luther, turning towards the meeting,

"In declaring that the Church universal necessarily has a head, Mr. Doctor does well. If any one here present, alleges the contrary, let him rise! As for me I have nothing to do with it."

ECK.—"If the Church militant has never been without a monarch, I should very much wish to know who he can be, if not the pontiff of Rome?"

Luther looks up to heaven and rejoins authoritatively,

"The head of the Church militant is Jesus Christ himself and not a man. This I hold in virtue of God's own testimony. '*Christ,*' saith the Scripture, '*must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*'"² Let us not listen, then, to those who would confine Christ to the Church triumphant in heaven. His reign is a reign of faith. We see not our head; yet we have him."³

Eck, not admitting that he was beaten, and having recourse to other arguments, replied :

"The unity of the priesthood, as saith St. Cyprian, is to be traced to Rome."⁴

LUTHER.—"As respects the western Church I admit. But does not this Roman Church itself trace its origin to that of Jerusalem? It is this last which is properly the mother and the nurse of all the Churches?"⁵

¹ Nam quod monstrum esset, Ecclesiam esse acephalem! L. Opp. lat. i. p. 243.)

² 1 Ep. to the Corinthians, xv. 25.

³ Prorsus audiendi non sunt qui Christum extra Ecclesiam militantem tendunt in triumphantem, cum sit regnum fidei. Caput non videmus; tamen habemus. (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 243.)

⁴ Unde sacerdotalis unitas exorta est. (Ibid. p. 243.)

⁵ Hæc est matrix propriæ omnium ecclesiarum. (Ibid. p. 244.)

Eck.—“St. Jerome declares that if an extraordinary and paramount authority be not conceded to the pope, there will be throughout the Churches as many schisms as there are pontiffs.”¹

LUTHER.—“*Granted*,” says he, “that is to say, that should all other believers consent, such authority might be lodged with the first pontiff by human right.² No more do I deny that should all the faithful throughout the world unite in recognising as first and sovereign pontiff, the bishop of Rome, or of Paris, or of Magdeburg, he ought to be acknowledged as such, because of the respect due to such an accord of the whole Church, but this has never been, nor ever will be seen. In our days does not the Greek Church refuse her assent to Rome?”

Luther was quite prepared at that time to own the pope as the Church’s chief magistrate, freely elected by her; but he denied that he was appointed to that office by God. It was not until a somewhat later period that he denied there being any manner of obligation to submit to him. His taking that step was a result of the disputation at Leipsick. But Eck had come forward on a field with which Luther was better acquainted than he was. Eck appealed to the Fathers: he beat him by the Fathers.

“That this which I have stated was St. Jerome’s meaning I shall prove by the epistle of Jerome himself to Evagrius: Every bishop, says he, be he at Rome, be he at Eugubium, be he at Constantinople, at Rhegium, at Alexandria, or at Thanis, has the same merit and the same priesthood.³ Bishops rank high or low according as wealth makes them mighty or as poverty leaves them in a humble position.”

From the writings of the Fathers Luther passed to the decrees of the councils, where the bishop of Rome is found to rank only as first among equals.⁴

“We read,” said he, “in the decree of the council of Africa: That the bishop of the first see be called neither prince of the pontiffs nor sovereign pontiff, nor by any other name of the

¹ Cui si non exors quædam et ab omnibus eminens detur potestas. (L. Opp. lat. i. 243.)

² *Detur*, inquit, hoc est jure humano, posset fieri, consentientibus cæteris omnibus fidelibus. (Ibid. p. 244.)

³ Ejusdem meriti et ejusdem sacerdotii est. (Ibid.)

⁴ Primus inter pares.

kind, but simply bishop of the first see. If the monarchy of the bishop of Rome were of divine right," continues Luther, "would not these words amount to heresy?"

Eck replied by one of those subtle distinctions which were so familiar to him:

"The bishop of Rome, if you will have it so, is not universal bishop, but bishop of the universal Church."¹

LUTHER.—"I don't wish to say a word in rejoinder to such a reply, but leave our hearers to judge for themselves."

"Assuredly," he continued, "there's a gloss for you, worthy of a theologian, and one very fit to content a disputant who covets glory. It is not for nothing that I am staying here at a heavy cost in Leipsick, seeing I have learnt that the pope is not, indeed, universal bishop, but bishop of the universal Church!"²

ECK.—"Well then, I come to the essential point. The venerable doctor asks me to prove that the primacy of the Church of Rome is of divine right; I prove it by those words of Christ: '*Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.*' St. Augustine in one of his epistles thus explains that passage: 'Thou art Peter, and on this stone, that is to say, on Peter, I will build my Church.' It is true that the same Augustine has elsewhere given it as the meaning, that by this stone, Christ himself is to be understood; but he has no where retracted his first exposition."

LUTHER.—"If the reverend doctor would impugn what I say, let him first himself reconcile these contradictory expressions of St. Augustine. For certain it is that St. Augustine has *very often* said that by the stone, Christ is meant, and hardly perhaps has he in one instance said that it means Peter himself. But granting even that St. Augustine and all the Fathers should say that the apostle is the stone spoken of by Christ, I would singly oppose them on the authority of Holy Scripture, that is by divine right,³ for it is written: *Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*⁴ Peter himself calls Christ

¹ Non episcopus universalis, sed universalis Ecclesiæ episcopus. (Ibid. 246.)

² Ego glorior me tot expensis non frustra. . . . (L. Epp. i. 299.)

³ Resistam eis ego unus, auctoritate apostoli, id est divino jure. (L. Epp. lat. i. 237.)

⁴ 1 Ep. of St. Paul to the Corinthians, iii. 11.

the living corner stone, on which we are built up a spiritual house."¹

ECK.—“I am amazed at the humility and the modesty with which the reverend doctor undertakes singly to oppose so many illustrious Fathers, and pretends to know more on the subject than the supreme pontiffs, councils, doctors, and universities' . . . It were matter of astonishment doubtless that God should conceal the truth from so many saints and martyrs. . . until the coming of the reverend Father.”

LUTHER.—“The Fathers are not opposed to me. St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, the most excellent doctors, speak as I do. *Super isto articulo fidei, fundata est Ecclesia*,² says St. Ambrose, in explaining what we are to understand by the stone on which rests the Church. Let my opponent then check his loquacity. To speak as he does is to excite hatred, not to discuss a question like a true doctor.”

Eck had not expected to find his opponent so well informed and so well able to extricate himself from the labyrinth in which he had sought to perplex him. “The reverend doctor,” said he, “has entered the field after having made himself master of his subject. Your lordships must excuse me if I do not present the fruits of equally accurate research: I came here to discuss a question, not to make a book.” Eck was confounded, but scorned to yield. In default of reasons, he had recourse to a despicable and odious artifice, which though it could not vanquish his opponent, could not fail at least greatly to embarrass him. Let but the charge of being a Bohemian, a heretic, a Hussite, hang over Luther, and he is overcome; and such was the stratagem to which the doctor of Ingolstadt had recourse. “It has been acknowledged,” said he, “from primitive times, by all good Christians, that the Church of Rome holds her primacy from Christ himself, and not of human right. I must admit, however, that the Bohemians, in obstinately defending their errors, attacked this doctrine. I beg the venerable Father’s pardon. If I am an enemy to the Bohemians because they were the Church’s enemies, and if the present disputation reminds me of those heretics; for. . . according to my weak judgment . .

¹ 1 Ep. of St. Peter, ii. 4, 5.

² The Church is founded on this article of faith. (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 245.)

the conclusions at which the doctor has arrived are altogether in favour of those errors. We are even assured that the Hussites openly glory in them."

Eck had calculated aright. All his partisans gave a particularly favourable reception to this treacherous insinuation, and could not restrain the feelings of satisfaction which it gave them.

"These insults," said the Reformer afterwards, "gratified them much more sensibly than did the disputation itself."¹

LUTHER.—"I like not, and never shall I like any kind of schism. In as much as the Bohemians, at their own proper instance, secede from our unity, they do what is wrong, even although the divine right should be in favour of their doctrines, . . . since the divine right is the love and unity of the Spirit."^{2 3}

It was at the forenoon meeting of the 5th of July that Luther spoke thus, shortly before the summons to dinner led to the usual adjournment. Probably one or other of the doctor's friends, possibly one or other of his adversaries, made him sensible that he had gone too far in condemning the Christians of Bohemia as he had done. Had they not, in fact, maintained what Luther at that very time was defending? Accordingly, when the proceedings recommenced at two o'clock, Luther began by firmly saying:

"Among the articles held by John Huss and the Bohemians, some are highly Christian. There is no denying this. Such is the following: that there is but one universal Church; and this other, that it is not necessary to salvation that we believe the Roman Church to be superior to other churches. Whether it were Wickliff or Huss that said so is of no consequence. . . . the statement is true."

¹ Et, ut fama est, de hoc plurimum gratulantur. (Ibid. 250.)

² Nunquam mihi placuit, nec in æternum placebit quodeunque schisma. . . Cum supremum jus divinum sit charitas et unitas spiritus. (L. Opp. lat. i. 250.) I am sensible that the literal is a bad translation of *jus divinum*, *droit divin*. Perhaps "law of God" is better. Tr.

³ Here we see that even Luther was not positively inclined to secede from the Church of Rome: in this respect so far condemning the Hussites and Bohemians, as having, in his view, arbitrarily done so. His opinion was that a man ought to wait until the last extremity. This dimness, however, in his views, as appears from what immediately follows, began from this very period in some measure to clear away, owing mainly to the resistance opposed to him by Dr. Eck—L. R. It may be observed, also, that the popedom has ever since Luther's times been making it more and more difficult for a Christian holding any correct views of the Gospel to remain in its communion. The decrees of the council of Trent, the bull *Unigenitus* anathematising the doctrines of grace held by the Jansenists, together with a mass of modern superstitions and blasphemies, had not then appeared to place the Church of Rome universally in flagrant opposition to the Gospel. Tr.

Luther's saying this produced an immense sensation among those who heard it. People hardly could believe their ears as the abhorred names of Huss and Wickliff were introduced eulogistically by a monk before a catholic assembly! . . . A murmur of disapprobation ran through nearly the whole meeting and even duke George began to feel exceedingly alarmed. The standard of civil war which had so long desolated the states of his maternal ancestors, seemed ready to be unfurled in Saxony. Unable to repress his emotion, he exclaimed aloud, and so as to be heard by all present: "The man is mad!"¹ Then, shaking his head, he planted his hands on his sides. The whole meeting became violently agitated; people rose and talked with each other, and such as had dropt asleep roused themselves. The adversaries triumphed, and Luther's friends were greatly embarrassed; several persons who till then had heard him with pleasure, began to doubt his orthodoxy. The impression left by what he had said was never weakened in the mind of George; from that moment he regarded him with an evil eye and became his enemy.²

As for Luther, he did not suffer himself to be intimidated by this explosion of murmurs. "Gregory of Nazianzen," he calmly went on to say, "Basil the great, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, together with an immense number of other Greek bishops, have been saved, and they did not believe the Church of Rome to be superior to the other churches. The pontiffs of Rome have no authority to make new articles of faith. Holy Scripture is the sole authority for the faithful Christian. It is the only *divine right*. I beseech Mr. Doctor to allow that the pontiffs of Rome have been men, and not to think fit to make them gods."³

Eck then betook himself to one of those pleasantries which gratuitously give an air of petty triumph to the person who employs them.

"The reverend Father," says he, "in his ignorance of the art of cookery, mixes up Greek saints with schismatics and

¹ Das walt die Sucht!

² Nam adhuc erat dux Georgius mihi non inimicus, quod sciebam certo. (L. Opp. in Præf.)

³ Nec potest fidelis christianus cogi ultra sacram Scripturam, quæ est proprie jus divinum. (L. Opp. lat. i. 252.)

heretics, so as to defend the perfidy of heretics with the odour of sanctity in the Fathers.”¹

LUTHER, sharply interrupting Eck,

“The excellent doctor speaks impudently. For me there is no communion between Christ and Belial.”

Such were the discussions in which the two doctors engaged. The meeting listened with interest, yet their attention flagged at times, so that they were well enough pleased when something occurred to amuse and divert them. It often happens that the most comical incidents mingle with the gravest matters; such was the case at Leipsick.

According to the custom of those days, duke George kept a court fool. This jester was told by some who wanted a joke, “that Luther held that a court fool might marry, but that Eck maintained the reverse.” Upon this, the jester conceived an utter aversion for Eck, and each time he entered the hall among the duke’s attendants, eyed the theologian with a look that portended mischief. The chancellor of Ingolstadt, not thinking it beneath him to indulge a joke, shut one eye (the fool had lost one) and with the other looked askance at the little personage, whereupon the latter lost his temper and overwhelmed the grave doctor with abuse. “The whole assemblage,” says Peifer, “laughed heartily, and the diversion thus created gave some relief to the extreme tension of their minds.”^{2 3}

At the same time scenes were beheld in the city and its churches, sufficiently indicating the horror with which Luther’s bold assertions had filled the partizans of Rome. The cry of scandal was heard chiefly in the monasteries attached to the pope. One sabbath the Wittemberg doctor went into the church of the Dominicans previous to grand mass, and when

¹ At Rev. *Pater artis coquinarie* minus instructus, commiscet sanctos græcos cum schismaticis et hæreticis, ut fuco sanctitatis Patrum, hæreticorum tueatur perfidiam. (L. Opp. lat. i. 252.)

² L. Opp. (W.) xv. 1440.—2. Löschner. iii. p. 281.

³ The importance of such relief in the case of long discussions, may account for many of the gravest divines, who would have thought it an offence against decency and good taste to venture on the ludicrous in the pulpit, having by no means considered it as out of place in protracted discussions. It was the advice of a late eminent leader at the Scotch bar to a young advocate there, “always to begin with a joke,” and Luther, one would sometimes think, must have been of the same opinion. See in particular his *De captivitate Babylonica Ecclesie*. The Leipsick disputation was of too grave a nature, not to be begun with peculiar solemnity. TR.

there was nobody there but some monks who were saying low masses at little altars. Hardly was it known in the monastery that Luther, the heretic, was in church, than the monks ran in all haste, seized the ostensory, took it to the tabernacle and shut it up, taking special care that the most holy sacrament should not be profaned by being exposed to the heretical gaze of the Wittenberg Augustinian. Those who were reading mass at the same time hastily gathered up the various articles used in the ceremony, left the altars, ran across the church, and fled into the sacristy, an historian tells us, as if the devil were at their heels.

The subject in dispute furnished a topic for conversation every where, at the inns and hotels, at the university and the court, every one giving his own views upon it. Angry as he felt, duke George did not obstinately resist all conviction. One day while at dinner with Eck and Luther, he interrupted the conversation by saying: "Whether it be by divine right or by human right, the pope is still the pope."¹ Luther was highly pleased at hearing these words. "The prince," said he, "never would have used them, had he not felt the force of my arguments."

The disputation on the subject of the pope's primacy had now lasted five days, when, on the 8th of July, they came to discuss the doctrine of purgatory, the debate upon which occupied two days. Luther still admitted the existence of purgatory; but he denied that this doctrine formed any part of what was taught by Scripture and the Fathers, in the manner that the schoolmen and his opponent pretended that it was. "Our doctor Eck," said he in alluding to the superficial spirit of his opponent, "has to-day been running over Holy Scripture almost without having touched it, like a spider upon the water."

On the 11th of July the indulgences fell to be discussed. "It was a mere diversion, and a disputation fit to make people laugh," says Luther, "the indulgences fell flat to the ground, and Eck agreed with me at almost every point."² Eck himself said: "Had I not had a disputation with doctor Martin on the prim-

¹ Ita ut ipse dux Georgius inter prandendum, ad Eccium et me dicat: "Sive sit jure humano, sive sit jure divino, papa; ipse est papa." (L. Opp. in Præf.)

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 246.

acy of the pope, I might almost have been of one mind with him." ¹

The next subjects of disputation were repentance, the absolution granted by priests, and satisfactions. Eck, as usual, quoted the schoolmen, the Dominicans, and the pope's canons. Luther wound up the disputation with these words:

"The reverend doctor retreats from before the Holy Scriptures as the devil flies from the cross. As for me, with all the respect due to the Fathers, I prefer the authority of scripture, and it is that which I would recommend to our judges."²

Here closed the disputation between Eck and Luther. Two days more were spent by Carlstadt and the Ingolstadt doctor in discussing the merits of man in good works. On the 16th of July, the proceedings were finally concluded after having occupied twenty days, by a discourse from the rector of Leipsick. He had hardly pronounced the last word, when a burst of music was heard and the solemnity was terminated by singing the *Te Deum*.

But during this solemn hymn, the minds of those present were no longer what they had been when the *Veni Spiritus* was sung. Already the presentiments of many seemed to be realized, and the blow struck by the champions of the two doctrines had inflicted a severe wound on the popedom.

VI. These theological disputations, though of such a kind that the people of the world would now grudge devoting a few brief moments to them, had been followed and listened to for twenty whole days with much attention, even laymen, including knights and princes, showing a sustained interest as they proceeded.³ Duke Barnim of Pomerania and duke George made

¹ So wollt, er fast enig mit mir gewest seyn. L. Opp. (L.) xvii 246.

² Videtur fugere a facie Scripturarum, sicut diabolus crucem. Quare, salvis reverentiis Patrum, præfero ego auctoritatem Scripturæ, quod commendo iudicibus futuris. (L. Opp. lat. i. 291.)

³ This is certainly one of the most extraordinary circumstances attending the disputation, and it shows the rapid success that had attended the establishment of universities by all the German princes, each in his own territories, in the preceding century. The popularity of Luther's reasoning, including also his direct appeals to Holy Scripture and inductions therefrom, prove that the lettered youth of Germany was fast escaping from "those depths of abstruse and metaphysical inquiring"—"that spirit of metaphysical and frivolous subtlety," which Dr. Robertson remarks as distinguishing the first literary efforts of the middle ages. The learning of the studious was evidently becoming of a kind fitted at once to excite and enlarge the minds of the industrious classes, and to

themselves particularly remarkable by their assiduity, while some of Eck's own friends among the divines of Leipsick "slept very soundly," says an eye witness. Nay, they had even to be awakened at the close of the sittings to prevent their going without dinner.

Luther was the first to leave Leipsick; Carlstadt left it next, and Eck remained some days after both were gone.

At the close of the contest, as usual, no decision was pronounced.¹ Each spoke of it in his own way. "At Leipsick," says Luther, "time was lost, truth not investigated. During the two years that we have been canvassing the doctrines of our opponents, so rigorous has been our examination, that we might have counted all their bones. Eck, on the contrary, has hardly skimmed the surface;² but in bawling he has done more in an hour than we in two long years."

Writing privately to his friends, Eck allowed that he had been beaten at various points; but he was at no loss for reasons to account for this. "The Wittembergers vanquished me at sundry points," he writes to Hochstraten on July 24th, "first, because they brought books with them; secondly, because the disputation was taken down for them in writing, so that they

receive a healthy influence from their practical habits and common sense. The universality of Evangelical doctrines may be seen in their finding so many adherents in both these classes.

We question whether the learning of the lay aristocracy of Europe was ever so high as at this time, or mental superiority ever so valued by men and sometimes even by women of that rank. Never since certainly have they been more interested in great religious questions, or more personally religious than in the sixteenth century. Some of the consequences of this state of things are curious and instructive. The nobles lost that inordinate passion for war which till then had distinguished them; but as wars, chiefly arising from the bigotted determination of Rome to crush all opposition, still continued, soldiers of fortune, like the *condottieri* of Italy, began to supersede feudal chiefs in the conduct of armies—a change which greatly demoralised the military. This remark I owe to the able and accomplished Mr. Groen Van Prinsterer, editor of the *Archives ou correspondance inédite de la Maison d' Orange—Nassau*. To this demoralisation of the military, arising from the religious and civil amelioration of all other classes, we may impute most of the ferocities that attended the religious wars of the sixteenth century, and too often tarnished the reputation of both sides. Protestants soldiers then, as in the case of our own country at the present day, were often rapacious and insolent, not because the great body of Protestants was so, but because Protestantism does not foster a military taste; it fosters peaceful industry, and hence indirectly, leads to the employment of mere mercenaries in war. TR.

¹ Ad exitum certaminis, uti solet, nulla prodiit decisio. (Pallavicini, i. 65.)

² Totam istam conclusionum cohortem multo acrius et validius nostri Wittembergenses . . . oppugnaverunt et ita examinaverunt ut ossa eorum numerare licuerit, quas Eccius vix in facie cutis leviter perstrinxit. (L. Epp. i. 291.)

could examine it in their own houses at leisure; thirdly, because there were several of them, two doctors (Carlstadt and Luther,) Lange, vicar of the Augustinians, two licentiates, Amsdorff and a most arrogant nephew of Reuchlin (Melanchthon,) three doctors in law and several masters of arts; all lent their aid at the disputation, either in public or in private. But as for me, I presented myself alone, having equity for my only companion." Eck forgot Emser, the Bishop, and all the Leipsick doctors.¹

But though such admissions escaped from Eck in a familiar correspondence, the case was very different as respected the public. A mighty noise about what they called *their* victory was raised by the Ingolstadt doctor and the Leipsick divines. They every where spread circulated reports on the subject, and these were sedulously repeated by all the tongues of the party as most satisfactory statements, "Eck is exulting every where," wrote Luther.² But his laurels were disputed in the camp of Rome. "Had we **not** come to his assistance," said the men of Leipsick, "the illustrious doctor would have been overthrown. "The Leipsick divines are good enough people," said the Ingolstadt doctor on his side, "but I expected too much from them; I alone did everything." "You see," said Luther to Spalatin, "that they are singing a new Iliad and a new Æneid. They are so good as to make me a Hector or a Turnus, while Eck is an Achilles or an Æneas. The only matter of doubt with them is whether it was by the armies of Eck, or by those of Leipsick, that the victory was achieved. All I can say in elucidation of the subject is, that doctor Eck never ceased bawling, and that the Leipsick folks no less constantly held their peace."³

"Eck triumphed in the eyes of those who don't understand the matter, and who have grown old in the study of the schoolmen;" says the elegant, the witty, and the wise Mosellanus; "but Luther and Carlstadt remained victors in the judgment of all who have learning, mind, and modesty."⁴

¹ Verum in multis me obruerunt. (Corpus Reformat. i. 83.)

² Eccius triumphat ubique. (L. Epp. i. 290.)

³ Novam quamdam Iliada et Æneida illos cantare. (L. Epp. i. p. 305.)

⁴ Lutheri Sieg sey um so viel weniger berühmt, weil der Gelehrten, Verstandigen, und derer die sich selbst nicht hoch rühmen, wenig seyen. (Seckendorff, 207.)

Still the Leipsick disputation was not doomed to pass away in smoke, but like every act proceeding from a devoted spirit, it bore fruit. Luther's words had penetrated into the minds of those who had heard him, with a power that nothing could resist; several of those who, day after day, had filled the castle hall were subjugated by the truth; nay, it was among its most decided adversaries that it was chiefly victorious. Doctor Eck's secretary, familiar friend, and disciple, Poliander, was gained over to the Reformation. From the year 1522, he openly preached the Gospel at Leipsick. John Cellarius, professor of Hebrew, one of the most determined opponents of the Reformation, had been seized by the words of the powerful doctor, and began to search more deeply into Holy Scripture. He soon resigned his place and, in the depth of his humility, went to study at the feet of Luther at Wittenberg. He was afterwards pastor at Frankfort and at Dresden.

Among those who took their places on the seats reserved for the court and who sat around duke George, was George of Anhalt, a young prince, twelve years old, descended from a family that had become famous in its contests with the Saracens. He was then studying at Leipsick under the superintendence of a tutor. This illustrious youth was already remarkable for his keen pursuit of learning and eager thirst for truth. He was often heard to repeat those words of Solomon: "*Lying words are unfit for a prince.*" The Leipsick disputation excited serious reflections in this boy, and gave him a decided predilection for Luther.¹ Some time afterwards he was offered a bishoprick, and his brothers, joined by all his other relations, urged him to accept of it, as they wanted to push him on to the highest dignities of the Church. But he was not to be shaken in his purpose of refusing. On the death of his godly mother, who had been a secret friend of Luther's, he fell into the possession of all the Reformer's writings. He had offered up constant and fervent prayers to God, beseeching him to incline his heart to the truth, and often while alone in his closet, he would repeat with tears:² "*Deal mercifully with thy servant, and teach me thine ordinances.*" Nor

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xv. 1440.

² . . . A Deo petivit, flecti pectus suum ad veritatem, ac lacrymans sæpe hæc verba repetivit. . . . (Mel. Adami, Vita Georgii, Anhalt. p. 248.)

were his prayers unheard. Convinced and allured by the Gospel, he fearlessly ranged himself on its side. In vain did his guardians, and duko George in particular, beset him with their entreaties and representations. He remained inflexible, and George, half convinced by the reasons that were urged by his ward, exclaimed, "I can say nothing in reply to him; but will abide notwithstanding in my church, for I am too old a dog to learn new ways." We shall yet find this most amiable prince one of the brightest stars of the Reformation. He preached the word of life himself to his subjects, and to him might be applied what Dion says of Marcus Antoninus: "His whole life was of a piece; he was a good man and there was no dissimulation in him."¹

What fell from Luther's lips was enthusiastically received chiefly among the students. They felt the difference between the spirit and life that breathed in the Wittenberg doctor's instructions on the one hand, and the chancellor of Ingolstadt's sophistical distinctions and idle speculations on the other. They saw that Luther relied on the Word of God, while Eck had nothing to rest upon but human traditions. The natural result speedily followed; the lecture rooms of the university of Leipsick were almost emptied after the disputation. This result was hastened by the plague appearing to have broken out at Leipsick. But there were many other universities, Erfurt and Ingolstadt for example, to which the students might have gone. The force of truth, however, attracted them to Wittenberg, and the number in attendance there was in consequence doubled.²

Among those who had gone from the one university to the other, there was remarked a youth of sixteen, of a melancholy and reserved disposition, and who in the midst of the conversations and amusements of his fellow-students, seemed often absorbed by his own thoughts.³ His relations at first supposed that he was of a weak mind; but ere long they saw in him such quickness of apprehension and such constant application to his studies, that they began to entertain high hopes with regard to

¹ "Ομοιως διὰ πάντων ἐγένετο, ἀγαθὸς δὲ ἦν, καὶ οὐδὲν προσποίητον εἶχεν. (See Melch. Adam. p. 255.)

² Peifer Histor. Lipsiensis, 356.

³ Et cogitabundus et sæpe in medios sodalities quasi peregrinante animo. (Melch. Adami Vita Crucigeri, p. 193.)

him. His undeviating integrity, candour, modesty, and piety, made him beloved by all, and Mosellanus pointed him out as a model to the whole university. His name was Gaspard Cruiger; his birth-place, Leipsick. This new Wittemberg student was afterwards the friend of Melanchthon and the assistant of Luther in translating the Bible.

The Leipsick disputation was followed by consequences still greater than these. It was there that the great theologian of the Reformation received his call. Retiring and taciturn, Melanchthon, though present at the discussion, had hardly taken any part in it, having until then been engaged with literature only. But what he witnessed there, had given his thoughts a new impulse, and had launched the eloquent professor into the sphere of theology. Thenceforth he brought the whole of his profound learning into the service of the Word of God. He had received the truth of the Gospel with the simplicity of a little child. His hearers heard him expound the doctrines of salvation with a grace and a perspicuity that ravished all who listened to him. He went boldly forward in this to him new career, for, he would say, Christ will never be wanting to his own.¹ From that moment the two friends went on together, wrestling in behalf of truth and freedom, the one with the energy of St. Paul, the other with the mildness of St. John. Luther has admirably stated the difference between their vocations. "I was born," says he, "to engage in earnest struggles on the field of battle, with parties and with demons. Hence my writings are full of war and storm. It is necessary that I uproot the stocks and trunks, clear away the thorns and brushwood, fill up the swamps and sloughs. I am the rough woodman whose office it is to open up the high-ways and to smooth the roads. But the master of arts, Philip, advances with the utmost calmness and gentleness; he tills the ground and plants it out; he joyously sows and waters according to the gifts that God has so liberally bestowed on him."²

If Melanchthon, the tranquil sower, was called to work by the Leipsick disputation, Luther, the vigorous woodsman, felt his arms strengthened by it, and his courage still further enkindled.

¹ *Christus suis non deerit.* (Corp. Reform. i. 104.)

² *L. Opp.* (W.) xiv. 200.

In short, the mightiest result of the discussion was to be seen in Luther himself. "The scholastic theology," says he, "crumbled then into nothing in my eyes, under the triumphant presidency of Dr. Eck." The veil which the school and the Church had combined to place before the sanctuary, was then rent in twain from top to bottom, for the Reformer. Constrained to engage in new researches, he arrived at unexpected discoveries, and with equal indignation and astonishment beheld the evil in all its extent. On scrutinizing the annals of the Church, he saw that the supremacy of Rome had no better origin than ambition on the one hand, and a credulous ignorance on the other. Instead of being allowed to remain silent in regard to these lamentable discoveries, his soul was urged into a decided course by the haughty conduct of his opponents in their pretended triumph, and by the efforts they made to extinguish the light. He went forward in the path along which God was conducting him, without allowing himself to be disquieted about the issue to which it led. Luther pointed to this as the time of his emancipation from the papal yoke. "Learn from me," he said, "how difficult it is to shake off errors which the whole world tends to settle down upon us by its example, and which by long habit become in us a second nature."¹ I had at that time been publicly reading and explaining the Holy Scriptures with much zeal, so that I knew almost all of it by heart.² I had also all the first-fruits of knowledge and of faith in my Lord Jesus Christ; that is to say, I knew that we are not justified and saved by our works but by faith in Christ; and I even openly maintained that it is not by divine right that the pope is the chief of the Christian Church. And yet I could not perceive the necessary consequence of all this, namely, that the pope is necessarily and certainly of the devil.³ For that which is not of God, must of necessity be of the devil!" Luther adds farther on: "I no longer give free vent to my indignation against those who are attached to the pope, since I who for many years had been

¹ Quam difficile sit eluctari et emergere ex erroribus, totius orbis exemplo firmatis. . . . (L. Opp. lat in Præf.)

² Per septem annos, ita ut memoriter pene omnia tenerem. . . . (L. Opp. lat. in Præf.)

³ Quod enim ex Deo non est; necesse est ex diabolo esse. (Ibid.)

reading the Holy Scriptures so carefully, still remained obstinately attached to popery.”^{1 2}

Such were the real consequences of the Leipsick disputation, and they far exceeded in importance that event itself.³ It proved like one of those early successes in a campaign which at once test and stimulate the courage of an army.

VII. Eck now abandoned himself to all the intoxication of what he would fain have passed off as a victory. He seemed as if he would tear Luther's character to shreds. He heaped accusations upon accusations.⁴ He wrote to Frederick, and desired, like an able general, to take advantage of the confusion which ever follows a battle, in order to obtain important concessions from that prince. And while he waited for the measures to be taken against his adversary in person, he insisted that his writings, including those even which he had never read, should be committed to the flames. He besought the Elector to convene a provincial council: “Let us utterly extirpate the whole

¹ Cum ego tot annis sacra legens diligentissime, tamen ita hæsi tenaciter. (Ibid.)

² Thus have we from Luther himself the gradual process of his growing enlightenment and also the pure source whence all proceeded. This was, in general, the Word of God: in particular, and originally derived from that, the doctrine of justification by grace, which had penetrated his whole soul and made him as it were a new man. The pope's assumed authority had not then occupied his thoughts: he was at first possessed with a feeling of respect for it. In this respect he came at last, though very slowly, to better views, and these might so far be ascribed to the shameless proceedings of his enemies, until the full light of truth streamed upon his mind in that respect also. Thus do we discover the wonderful ways of Providence, and learn too that the Reformation was the work of God and not of men.—L. R.

³ May we not add as one of the most important consequences of the Leipsick disputation, the confidence it must have communicated to the laity in their struggles with the clergy of Rome, to see Luther attack the latter so successfully with weapons which all men of plain understanding, with the Scriptures in their hands, might use with greater or less effect? This would not have been the result had scholastic arms been employed on both sides. Nor can we doubt that the rage and vexation of Eck and other partisans of the popedom, were far more excited by seeing the kind of artillery by which they were vanquished—an artillery at once so popular and so powerful—than by the defeat itself. As it was by the ignorance of the laity that the clergy had risen to so important a political position in the nations of Europe, so by the increased intelligence of that same laity they must have expected to fall. It is interesting to contemplate these first symptoms of that fall, in connection with their early abuse of the means of monopolising power. See Guizot's Essays on the History of France; Essay iv. part 2d. chap. iv. Tr.

⁴ Proscidit, post abitum nostrum, Martinum inhumanissime. (Melanch. Corp. Reform. i. p. 106.)

vermin," said the foul-mouthed doctor, "before it has time to multiply to excess."¹

Nor was it against Luther only that he vented his wrath; he had the folly to bring Melanchthon into the lists. The fond friendship that connected the latter with the excellent Œcolampadius, led him to send that friend an account of the disputation, in which he speaks in high terms of Dr. Eck.² Yet the pride of the chancellor of Ingolstadt was offended, so as forthwith to take up his pen against "that Wittemberg grammarian, a man," says he, "who knows something indeed of Greek and Latin, but who has dared to publish a letter in which he had insulted him—Dr. Eck!"³

Melanchthon replied, and the reply is the earliest of its author's theological works. It is marked by the exquisite urbanity that distinguished that excellent man. Laying down the fundamental principles of hermeneutics, he demonstrates that we must not explain the Holy Scriptures by the Fathers but the Fathers by the Holy Scriptures. "How often is not Jerome mistaken," says he, "how often Augustine! how often Ambrose! How often do they differ in their opinions! how often do they retract their errors! . . . There is but one Scripture inspired by the Spirit from above, and pure and true in all things."⁴

"Luther, it is said, does not follow certain ambiguous expositions of the ancients; and wherefore should he follow them? In expounding that passage of Saint Matthew: '*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church*,' he speaks as Origen did, who alone is worth many; as Augustine in his homily; as Ambrose in his sixth book on St. Luke: I say nothing of others.—How then, will you say, do the Fathers contradict themselves? And what is there that should surprise us if they do?⁵ I believe the Fathers because I believe Holy Scripture. The meaning of Holy Scripture is one and

¹ Ehe das Ungeziffer uberhand nehme. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 271.)

² Eccius ob varias et insignes ingenii dotes. . . (L. Opp. lat. i. p. 337.)

³ Ausus est grammaticus Wittembergensis, græce et latine sane non indoctus, epistolam edere. . . (Ibid. 338.)

⁴ Una est Scriptura, cælestis spiritus, pura et per omnia verax. (Contra Eckium Defensio. Corp. Reform. i. p. 115.)

⁵ Quid igitur? Ipsi secum pugnant! Quid mirum? (Ibid.)

simple, as is the truth of heaven itself. We find this meaning by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and it is to be inferred from the thread and connection of what is said.¹ There is a philosophy which is enjoined on us in regard to the Scriptures of God; it consists in using them as the touch-stone for testing all the opinions and maxims of men."^{2 3}

It had been long since such mighty truths were set forth with so much elegance. Here the Word of God was restored to its place; and the Fathers to theirs. The simple method by which the sense of Scripture was to be obtained, was firmly traced. The Word emerged and was borne up amid all the difficulties and all the expositions of the School. Melancthon furnished the means of replying, in all times following, to those who, like Dr. Eck, might perplex the subject. The slender grammarian had gone forth and made the broad and lusty shoulders of the scholastic gladiator, yield to the first effort of his single arm.

The more Eck was convicted of weakness, the louder was the tone he assumed. The victory that had failed to follow his disputations, he pretended to secure by rhodomontades and accusations, and all that he uttered with such noisy assurance was echoed by the monks and other partizans of Rome. Luther was now assailed with reproaches from all parts of Germany; yet he remained passive under them all. "The more I see my name loaded with obloquy," said he at the close of the explanations he published on the Leipsick propositions, "the more do I glory in it. The truth, that is, Christ, must increase; I must decrease. The voice of the Bridegroom and the Bride, delights me more than all these clamours can alarm me. Men are not the authors of the evils that afflict me, and to them I bear no hatred. It is Satan, the prince of evil, that would frighten me. But he that

¹ Quem collatis Scripturis e filo ductuque orationis licet assequi. (Ibid. 114.)

² And this, indeed, is true philosophy. As in natural things, experience and observation alone form the elements of philosophical investigation, philosophy merely connecting these according to certain established principles, and as in this experience and investigation, no single individual can personally examine everything but the testimony of others is often employed, so does the philosophical investigation of higher things require a higher kind of experience which the Word of God communicates, and a simple faith in the testimony of the same, as the test to which human opinions must be subjected and by which they must be tried.—L. R.

³ Ut hominum sententias, decretaque, ad ipsas, seu ad Lydium lapidem exigamus. (Contra Eckium defensio. Corp. Reform. i. p. 115.)

is in us, is greater than he that is in the world. The judgment of our contemporaries is bad; that of posterity will be better.”¹

If the Leipsick disputation multiplied the enemies of Luther in Germany, it at the same time multiplied his friends. The Bohemian brethren wrote to him: “What Huss once was in Bohemia, you now are in Saxony; therefore do you pray and be strong in the Lord!”

Luther had a quarrel about this time with Emser, who was now a professor at Leipsick. The latter wrote to Dr. Sack, a zealous Roman Catholic at Prague, a letter of which the apparent object was to remove from the minds of the Hussites the idea that Luther was one of their way of thinking; but as Luther could not doubt that, though apparently desirous of justifying him, the learned Leipsicker aimed at bringing him under the suspicion of adhering to the Bohemian heresy, he wished at once to rend the veil wherewith his former host at Dresden sought to conceal his hostility. In order to effect this, he published a letter addressed “to the he-goat Emser,” Emser having for his arms a he-goat. In the closing words of this publication, he well describes his own character: “to love all men but to fear none.”^{2 3}

While new friends and new enemies were thus revealing themselves, old friends seemed to betray a decline in their regard for Luther. Staupitz, who had brought the Reformer out of the obscurity of the monastery at Erfurt, now began to show some degree of coldness. Luther had reached an elevation above the level and beyond the reach of Staupitz. “You abandon me,” Luther wrote to him, “I have been all day very sad on your account, like the weaned child that weeps for his mother.”⁴

¹ *Præsens male judicat ætas; judicium melius posteritatis erit.* (L. Opp. lat. i. 310.)

² L. Opp. lat. i. 252.

³ A character this that deserves at once our love and respect: the character of Christ's true disciple, who hates none, not even the most malignant opponents of the truth, yet who scruples not, at the fitting time, to expose their malice and pays no regard to their fury. Such was the character that displayed itself in Luther. No dread of the rage of his enemies made him falter; yet his mind was free from revenge: what he aimed at was their own real welfare. So confirmed was he in this sentiment during his whole life-time, that this maxim in his letter to Emser seemed interwoven, as it were, with all his undertakings.—L. R.

⁴ *Ego super te, sicut ablactatus super matre sua, tristissimus hac die fui.* (L. Epp. i. p. 342.)

“I was dreaming about you last night,” continues the Reformer, “You seemed about to leave me, and I was sobbing and shedding bitter tears. But you, holding out your hand to me, told me to be calm, and that you would come back to me.”

Miltitz the peace-maker, used fresh efforts to soothe the exasperation that now prevailed, but what means could produce this effect upon men who were still under all the feverish excitement produced by a violent struggle! His endeavours came to nothing. He brought the famous golden rose to the elector, who was now so indifferent with regard to it, as not even to care about receiving it in person.¹ Frederick knew what tricks were practised by Rome and was no longer to be duped by them.²

VIII. Far from recoiling, Luther was ever on the advance. Now it was that by the publication of his first commentary on the epistle to the Galatians, he dealt one of the rudest blows to error that it had yet received.³ No doubt the second commentary excelled the first; but even in the first, he very powerfully expounded the doctrine of justification by faith. Every word of the new apostle was instinct with life, and God employed him in penetrating men's hearts with the knowledge of himself: “Christ gave himself for our sins,” said Luther to the men of his day.⁴ “It was not silver or gold that he gave for us; it was not a man—no—nor all the angels: it was himself, out of whom there is nothing great, that he gave. And this incomparable treasure he gave . . . for our sins! Where now are they who proudly vaunt the power of their will? Where are the lessons of moral philosophy? Where are the power and the force of the law? Seeing our sins are so great that nothing can remove them, if it be not this immense ransom, shall we still pretend to obtain righteousness by the virtue of our will, by the power of the law, by the doctrines of men? What would we be at, with all these artifices and all these illusions? Ah, we would cover our iniquities with a delusive righteousness, and we would make ourselves such hypocrites as nothing in the universe could ever save.”

¹ Rosam quam vocant auream nullo honore dignatus est; imo pro (ridiculo) habuit. (L. Opp. lat. in Pref.)

² Intellexit princeps artes Romanæ curiæ et eos (legatos) digne tractare novit. (Ibid.)

³ September, 1519.

⁴ L. Opp. (L.) x. 461.

But while Luther thus establishes the principle that there is no salvation for man out of Christ, he shows, at the same time, that this salvation changes man and makes him to abound in good works. "The man," says he, "who has really heard the Word of Christ and who keeps it, is forthwith clothed with the spirit of love. If thou lovest him who hath made thee a present of twenty florins, or done thee some service, or in some manner signified his affection for thee, how much more oughtest thou to love Him who has not given for thee gold or silver, but who has given himself, who has received for thee so many wounds, who for thee has sweated blood, who died for thee; in a word, who in paying the ransom for all thy sins, swallowed up death and obtained a Father for thee in heaven who is full of love. . . . If thou lovest him not, thou hast not understood in thy heart what things he hath done for thee; thou hast not believed them; for faith works by love." "This epistle is my epistle," Luther would say in speaking of the epistle to the Galatians; "I have married it."

His adversaries made him go faster forward than he would have done without them. It was at this period that Eck brought upon him a new attack from the Franciscans of Juterbock. In his reply,¹ Luther, not satisfied with repeating what he had already taught, attacked the errors he had more lately discovered: "I should like to know," says he, "in what part of Scripture power is given to the popes to canonize saints; and, also, where is the necessity, where even the utility of canonizing them?"

. . . As for the rest," says he ironically, "let people canonize as many as they please!"

These new attacks of Luther remained unanswered, and in this respect the infatuation of his enemies was no less favourable to him than his own courage. They passionately defended things that were only accessory, yet when Luther assailed the foundations of the Roman doctrine, they looked on as these were shaken without saying a word. While they were busying themselves in defending some of the distant outworks, their dauntless adversary penetrated into the citadel itself, and there boldly planted the standard of truth. Accordingly, they were

¹ *Defensio contra malignum Eccii judicium.* (L. Opp. Lat. i. p. 356.)

² *Canoniset quisque quantum volet.* (Ibid. p. 367.)

not a little astonished afterwards, to see the fortress which they had set themselves to defend, undermined, fired, and falling to ruins amid the flames, at the very time they supposed it to be impregnable, and were still braving the assailants. Thus it is that great subversions ever take place.

Luther's thoughts now began to be occupied about the sacrament of our Lord's supper—a holy supper which he looked for in vain in the mass. One day, some time after his return from Leipsick, he entered the pulpit, and there delivered his meaning in words which require our particular attention, as they were the first he uttered on a subject which has since divided the Church of the Reformation into two parts. "In the sacrament of the altar," says, he, "there are three things that we must know—the sign, which ought to be outward and visible, and to have a corporal form; the thing signified, which is inward, spiritual, and apprehended by the mind of man; faith, which makes use of both."¹ Had definitions been pushed no farther than this, unity would not have been destroyed.² Luther goes on to say:

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 272.

² This would certainly, according to all human calculation, have proved a great advantage to the Reformation. The contention that sprang up on the subject of the Supper, has been the only proof with the least apparent ground to rest upon, that the Reformation destroyed the Church's unity and divided it into separate fragments. Not the separation from the Roman Church itself; not the separation from Socinians and Anabaptists, although these were accounted Protestants and partners in the Reformation, not the present divisions which seem to tear the Protestant Church to pieces, can even remotely establish this charge; for in all these separations there is no schism in the true church, but only a solemn separation from a spurious church or from erring sects and teachers; whereas, in consequence of the controversy relating to the Holy Supper, the true and pure Church of CHRIST was actually rent asunder. Yet the cause of this must be sought, not in the Reformation, but in the perversity of human nature. The Reformers were not absolutely saints: and at all events the schism was no worse than what had previously taken place between the Greek and Latin Churches. It was no doubt contrary to what Jesus had commanded, but not contrary to what He had foreseen: on which very account he forewarned and prayed against it, as a thing of which he foresaw and predicted the possibility. This we know that that prayer will one day receive its complete accomplishment; and we ought even now to congratulate ourselves that genuine Protestants no longer allow this point of doctrine to prevent them from being more and more united in spirit. That object will be attained just by means of the present common conflict with infidelity and superstition, whatever slanderous assertions to the contrary may proceed from the violent adherents of the latter, and however many apparent reasons in support of that calumny are furnished by the abettors of an unbelieving Christianity among Protestants of Socinian, Arian, Neologian, &c. opinions, in the divisions of which, under an outward show of toleration, they are the cause. The true Church, from being composed of distinct parties, is fast becoming one, and by so doing refutes this charge.—L. R.

"It were well that the Church, in a general council, should ordain the distribution of the two kinds (both elements) to all believers; not, however, that one kind only is insufficient, for faith of itself were already sufficient." These bold words pleased the congregation, although there were some among the hearers who were amazed and became angry. "It is false," said they, "and scandalous."¹

The preacher continued: "There is no union," said he, "more intimate, more profound, more indissoluble, than that which takes place between food and the body that the food sustains. Christ unites himself to us in the sacrament, in such a manner, that he acts as if he were ourselves. Our sins assail him. His righteousness defends us."²

But Luther was not content with expounding the truth: he attacked one of the most radical errors of Rome.³ "The Church of Rome pretends that the sacrament operates by itself and independently of the disposition of the person receiving it, and nothing more convenient than such an opinion. Hence the avidity with which the sacrament is sought for; hence too, the profits of the Romish clergy."⁴ Luther attacked that doctrine⁵

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 281.

² This is also the pure sentiment of the genuine Reformed—of the followers of Calvin. And although Zwingle's views were not perhaps so clear; although perhaps he attached the whole person of Christ more to the soul than to the body; still proofs may be found in his writings that his views were fundamentally the same. In regard to all in which the true Protestant Church, whether Lutheran or Reformed, has determined on this point contrary to the Church of Rome, namely, that not the act performed, not the outward observance, but faith in the soul alone, can avail, they are all agreed, as we know in the case of the Reformed Church, and as we learn from Luther, in what immediately follows.—L. R. The Calvinistic churches of the continent, all readers may not be aware, have generally been called Reformed churches, to distinguish them from the Lutheran or Protestant churches as well as from the Romish communion. TR.

³ Si quis dixerit per ipsa novæ legis sacramenta *ex opere operato* non conferri gratiam, sed solam fidem divinæ promissionis, ad gratiam consequendam sufficere, anathema sit. (Council of Trent, Sess. 7. canon 8.)

⁴ Add the doctrine employed as a fearful means of persecution in France under Louis XIV., that Protestants may be compelled to participate in the mass, though they not only have no faith in it as a sacrament, but detest it as idolatrous and abominable. The Jansenists, too spiritual and scriptural in their views to be tolerated by the popedom, though not protestants, regarded such forced communion as a horrible profanation. See De Rulhière in "The Suppression of the Reformation in France," pp. 85, 118, and 184. A superstitious belief in the efficacy of the sacraments without faith in the recipient, is too apt to creep into Protestant churches, and demands the utmost vigilance on the part of ministers. TR.

⁵ Known under the name of *opus operatum*.

and confronted it with its opposite,¹ in virtue of which, faith and right dispositions of the heart are necessary.

This energetic protest was fitted to bring down the whole fabric of ancient superstition; yet, most strange to say! it passed without notice. Yes—Rome, while she left unheeded what might well have wrung from her a cry of distress, rushed impetuously on the unimportant remark that fell from Luther as he began his discourse, on communicating in both kinds. On this discourse being published in December, a cry of heresy arose from all sides. “It is nothing more or less than the Prague doctrine,” said the court of Dresden, where the sermon came to hand during the Christmas holidays; and what is worse, the work is in German, in order that it may be understood by the unlearned.”² The prince was disquieted by it in his devotions, and the third Christmas holiday he wrote to his cousin Frederick: “Since this sermon was published, the number of those who receive the Supper under both kinds in Bohemia, has increased to six thousand persons. Your Luther, from being professor at Wittemberg, is about to be made bishop of Prague and arch-heretic!” . . . “He was born in Bohemia!” people exclaimed, “and of Bohemian parents, and instructed in Wickliff’s writings!”

These reports Luther thought it right to contradict in a publication, in which he gravely gives an account of his origin. “I was born at Eisleben,” says he, “and baptized in St. Peter’s Church there. Dresden is the nearest point to Bohemia that I have ever been at since I was born.”³

Duke George’s letter did not change the elector’s feelings with respect to Luther; for, some days after, that prince invited the doctor to a splendid entertainment given to the Spanish ambassador. There Luther engaged in controversy with Charles’s minister.⁴ The elector had previously told his chaplain to beg Luther to defend his cause with moderation. “Too much folly displeases men,” was Luther’s reply to Spalatin, “but too much wisdom displeases God. The Gospel cannot be defended without creating tumults and scandals. The word of God is a sword,

¹ Known under that of *opus operantis*.

² L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 281.

³ *Ceterum ego natus sum in Eisleben.* . . . (Luth. Epp. i. p. 389.)

⁴ *Cum quo heri ego et Philippus certavimus, splendide invitati.* (Ibid. p. 395.)

it is a war, it is a ruin, it is a stumbling-block, it is perdition, it is poison,¹ and as Amos has said, it is like a bear in the way and like a lioness in the forest. I seek for nothing. I ask for nothing. There is one greater than me who seeks and who asks. Whether he stand or fall therefore, I am neither benefitted, nor do I suffer loss."²

Every thing seemed now to indicate that Luther was to have more demands than ever on his faith and courage. Eck was plotting schemes of revenge. Instead of the laurels he had reckoned upon gathering, the Leipsick gladiator had become the laughter of all his countrymen who possessed any spirit. He was publicly attacked in pungent satires. There was *the epistle of the ignorant Canons*, written by Œcolampadius, and which cut Eck to the quick, and a complaint against Eck, probably from the pen of the excellent Pirkheimer of Nuremberg; a piece replete with a sarcastic point, and a dignity, of which Pascal's *Provincial Letters* alone can enable those who have not read it to form any idea.³

Luther expressed his dissatisfaction with several of these writings. "Better attack a man openly," said he, "than sting him from behind a hedge."⁴

¹ Verbum Dei gladius est, bellum est, ruina est, scandalum est, perditio est, venenum est. . . . (Ibid. 417.)

² Ego nihil quæro: est qui quærat. Stet ergo, sive cadat: ego nihil lucror, aut amitto. (Luth. Epp. i. 418.)

³ A work of the renowned advocate of the Jansenists, BLAISE PASCAL, bearing the title of "The Provincials, or Letters addressed by Louis of Montalto, to a friend in the provinces and to the Jesuits, on the Morality and Politics of those Fathers. In two parts." Under the name assumed on the title page, the author exposes, in an extremely pungent and often facetious manner, the abominable moral principles of the Jesuits. So much did this work excite their hatred (for after sundry fruitless attempts, they found it impossible to refute it) that they never rested until they had obtained from the civil power a sentence condemning it to be publicly burnt.—L. R. Sir James Mackintosh, in his History of England, seems to insinuate that Pascal's Provincials present a caricature of the party and its principles against which they were levelled, and he recommends the perusal of Father Daniel's *Entretiens de Cleanthe et d'Eudoxe*, a work intended to discredit Pascal by attacking his sincerity. Sir James might have corrected this error at the idea of being thought illiberal towards the Jesuits, by himself reading the *Apologie des Lettres Provinciales* and *Dissertation sur la foi qui est due au témoignage de Pascal dans ses Lettres Provinciales*—a work which confirms Pascal's charges not only by an examination of the evidence that existed in his day, but by referring to the doctrines and instructions of the Jesuits since their restoration by pope Pius VII. (7th Aug. 1814.) Rome, in fact, has in the 19th, as well as 16th and 17th centuries, her subtle and sophistical disputants ready to bewilder and perplex where they cannot refute, and to reason away Scripture, conscience, and common sense, by plausible refinements and distinctions. Tr.

⁴ Melior est aperta criminatio, quam iste sub sepe morsus. (Ibid. 426.)

What a misreckoning was there here for the chancellor of Ingolstadt! Abandoned by his fellow-countrymen, he prepared to pass beyond the Alps and invoke foreign aid. All along the road he breathed forth threatenings against Luther, Melancthon, Carlstadt, and even the elector himself. "From the magniloquence of his language," says the Wittemberg doctor, "you would say that he fancies himself to be God Almighty."¹ Maddened with rage and thirsting for revenge, Eck sets off for Italy, there to reap the reward of his pretended triumphs, and to forge at Rome, near the papal capitol, thunderbolts more potent than the frail scholastic arms which had fallen to pieces in his hands.

Luther was aware how much he had to apprehend from this journey of his antagonist, but he viewed it without alarm. Spalatin, in dismay, urged him to make offers of peace. "No," replied Luther, "for as much noise as he makes, I cannot retire from the contest. I commit the whole affair to God, giving my bark to the winds and waves. It is the Lord's war.⁴ Why should you imagine that it is by peace that Christ will promote his cause? Did he not engage in a warfare, even to the shedding of his own blood, and all the martyrs after him?"

Such was the position of the two Leipsick combatants at the commencement of the year 1520. The one was stirring up the entire popedom to attack his rival. The other was looking for war with all the composure with which one naturally looks for peace. The year that followed saw the storm burst forth.

¹ Deum crederes omnipotentem loqui. (L. Epp. i. 380.)

² Cogor rem Deo committere, data flatibus et fluctibus nave. Bellum Domini est. (Ibid. 425.)

BOOK SIXTH.

THE BULL FROM ROME.

(1520.)

1. A NEW personage was now to appear upon the scene. It was the will of God that the Wittenberg monk should be confronted with the mightiest monarch that Christendom had witnessed since the days of Charlemagne. He chose out a prince in the prime of youth, and to whom all things seemed to promise a long reign—a prince whose sceptre extended over a considerable part of the old world and over a world altogether new, so that, to use a celebrated expression, the sun never set on his vast dominions; and this potent prince He opposed to the humble Reformation, whose commencement we have watched in the anguish and the sighs of a poor monk, in one of the obscure cells of a monastery at Erfurt. The history of that monarch and of his reign was destined, it would seem, to teach a great lesson to the world.

It was to show the nothingness of “the power of man” when it presumes to enter into conflict with “the weakness of God.” Had a prince, animated with friendly regards for Luther, been called to the empire, the success of the Reformation would have been ascribed to his protection. Had the throne been filled even by an emperor opposed to the new doctrine, yet weak withal, its triumphs would have been explained by referring them to that weakness. But it was the haughty conqueror of Pavia¹ whose

¹ It was in a battle fought at Pavia in Italy, that Francis I. king of France, after many previous losses, was utterly defeated by his competitor for the general supremacy, Charles V., he himself made prisoner, and taken into Spain: from which imprisonment he was not delivered until he had concluded and signed a most humiliating treaty, imposed on him by Charles who, in consequence thereof, acquired the greatest renown.—L. R.

pride was to be humbled before the might of the divine Word; and all the world could see that the man who had found no difficulty in dragging Francis I. into the dungeons of Madrid, was obliged to lower his sword to the son of a poor miner.

The emperor Maximilian was now dead, and the electors had assembled at Frankfort for the purpose of naming his successor. This was an affair of the utmost importance to Europe in the circumstances in which it then stood, and all Christendom naturally felt an interest in the election. Though Maximilian had not been a great prince, still his memory was dear to the people, who loved to recall his ready wit and affability. Being often the subject of conversation with Luther and his friends, to these the Reformer one day related the following anecdote respecting him.

He was followed one day by a beggar, who in asking alms from him, called him his *brother*, "for," said he, "we are both descended from our common father, Adam. I am poor," he continued, "but you are rich, you ought therefore to assist me." At these words the emperor turned to him and said, "Hold now, here's a penny, and if all your other brothers will but give you as much, you will be a richer man than me."¹

No kind-hearted Maximilian was on this occasion to be called to wear the imperial crown. Times were altered; the mighty and the ambitious were about to dispute the throne of the emperors of the West; a powerful hand was about to grasp the reins of empire, and a long peace was on the eve of being succeeded by tedious and bloody wars.

On the meeting being convened at Frankfort, it was found that three kings had put in their claims for the crown of the Cæsars. First, there presented himself a youthful prince, grandson of the late emperor, born with the century, and hence nineteen years of age. His name was Charles; Ghent was his birthplace. His grandmother by the father's side, Mary, daughter of Charles the Bold, had left him Flanders and the rich states of Burgundy. His mother, Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand of Arragon, and Isabella of Castile, and the wife of Philip, son of the emperor Maximilian, had transmitted to him the united

¹ L. Oppi (W.) xxii. 1869.

crowns of the Spains, Naples, and Sicily, to which Christopher Columbus had added a new world. The demise of his grandfather had put him at once into possession of the hereditary states of Austria. This young prince, who was naturally endued with much mind, and who could be amiable when he liked, combined that taste for the exercises of war, in which the brilliant dukes of Burgundy had so long distinguished themselves, with the finesse and penetration of the Italians, with the respect for existing institutions which still characterises the house of Austria, and which promised the popedom a steady defender, and with an extensive knowledge of public affairs, for which he was indebted to the instructions of Chièvres. From the age of fifteen he had attended all the deliberations of his councils.¹ These various qualities seemed as it were covered and veiled by the abstraction and taciturnity of a Spaniard. His long face bore an expression of melancholy. "He is a godly quiet man," said Luther; "I'll vouch for it that he does not speak so much in a year as I do in a day."² Had the character of Charles been developed under liberal and Christian influences, he might perhaps have proved one of the most truly admirable princes to be found in history; but politics absorbed his life, and spoilt his hopeful dispositions.

Not satisfied with the multiplicity of sceptres he already wielded, the youthful Charles was ambitious of the dignity of emperor. "It is but a sunbeam that sheds a brightness on the house it shines upon," said some, "but put forth your hand to seize it, and you find nothing." Charles, on the contrary, considered it as the crowning point of all earthly grandeur, and the means of acquiring a magical influence over the minds of the nations.

The second of the three competitors was Francis I., king of France. The young paladins at the court of this king-knight, were perpetually telling him that he ought, like Charlemagne, to be emperor of all the West, and that, reviving the exploits of the ancient *preux*, he should attack the Crescent, which was threatening the empire, crush the infidels, and recover the Holy Sepulchre.

¹ Memoires de du Bellay, i. 45.

² L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1874.

“The dukes of Austria must be made to feel that the crown of the empire is not hereditary,” said the ambassadors of Francis to the electors. “Besides this, Germany requires in her present circumstances, not a youth of nineteen, but a prince combining acknowledged abilities with tried judgment. Francis will unite the arms of France and Lombardy with those of Germany in waging war with the Musulmans. Moreover, as liege lord of Milan he is already a member of the empire.” These reasons the French ambassadors confirmed by distributing four hundred thousand crowns in the purchase of votes, and by festivities contrived for the purpose of gaining over the guests.

Finally, Henry VIII. king of England, jealous of the influence which Francis or Charles would derive from the choice of the electors falling on either of them, appeared himself, also, as a candidate, but soon left those two powerful rivals to compete the crown by themselves.

The electors were little inclined to favour either. Their people, they thought, would regard the king of France as a foreign master, and such a master might well be expected to take from them that independence of which the aristocracy of his own states had seen themselves lately deprived. As for Charles, it was an ancient principle with the electors not to make choice of any prince that already acted an important part in the empire. The pope shared in these fears, and had no wish that either the king of Naples, his neighbour, or the king of France, whose enterprising genius he dreaded, should succeed. “Choose one of yourselves rather,” was the advice he sent to the electors. The elector of Treves proposed that Frederick of Saxony should be appointed, and the imperial crown was actually laid at the feet of that friend of Luther.

So widely known were Frederick’s wisdom and love for the people, that such a choice would have had the approval of all Germany. On the occasion of the revolt of Erfurt, he was urged to take that city by assault, yet he refused, because of his unwillingness that blood should be shed. “But,” it was said in reply, “it won’t cost five men.” “A single man would be too much rejoined the prince.”¹ It looked as if the election of the

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1858

protector of the Reformation, would secure the triumph of that great work. Ought not Frederick to have regarded the expressed desire of the electors as a call from God himself? Who could have presided better over the empire's destinies than so sage a prince? Who could have proved a more powerful opponent to the Turks than an emperor who was strong in point of faith? Perhaps the refusal by the elector of Saxony, much as he has been commended for it by historians, may have been a fault on the part of that prince; and one to which we may so far ascribe the struggles that afterwards tore Germany asunder. But it is not easy to say whether Frederick deserved most to be blamed for his want of faith or praised for his humility, for he was possessed with the idea that the very salvation of Germany demanded his refusal of the crown.¹ "Germany," said this modest and disinterested prince, "requires a more powerful emperor than I could make, to secure her safety. The Turk is at our gates. The king of Spain, whose hereditary possessions in Austria border upon the threatened frontier, is her natural defender."

On perceiving that the choice was to fall upon Charles, the Roman legate declared that the pope would withdraw his objections; and on the 28th of June, Maximilian's grandson was elected. "God," said Frederick afterwards, "gave him to us in kindness and in anger."² The Spanish deputies presented Frederick with thirty thousand golden florins as a mark of their master's gratitude; but this was refused by the prince, who also forbade his ministers to accept any present.³ He at the same time secured the liberties of Germany by a convention, which was sworn to by Charles's envoys in their master's name. The circumstances under which the latter became emperor, seemed likely, in other respects, to secure the liberties of Germany and the work of the Reformation, better than any oaths could do. This young prince had taken umbrage at the laurels won by his

¹ *Is vero heroica plane moderatione animi magnifice repudiavit. . . .* (Pallavicini, i. p. 79.)

² *L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1880.*

³ The above account of Frederick's conduct, which is the same as that given more fully by Dr. Robertson, is called in question by Father Daniel, but were even the overwhelming authorities adduced by the Scotch historian thought insufficient, that of Pallavicini in the preceding note, omitted by Dr. R., seems to set the matter at rest. TR.

rival, Francis I., at Marignan;¹ the struggle between them was about to be carried on in Italy, and the time it occupied might be expected to suffice for giving a firm establishment to the Reformation. Charles left Spain in May, and was crowned emperor, at Aix-la-Chapelle, on the 22d of October, 1520.

II. Foreseeing that the cause of the Reformation would soon be brought before the new emperor, Luther wrote to Charles before that prince had left Madrid. "If the cause I defend," said he, "is worthy of being brought before the throne of the heavenly majesty, it cannot be supposed beneath the consideration of a prince of this world. O Charles, prince of the kings of the earth, I cast myself as a suppliant at the feet of your most serene majesty, and conjure you to deign to take under the shadow of your wings, not me, but the cause itself of that eternal truth, for the defence of which God has intrusted you with the sword."² The young king put aside this strange letter from a German monk, without deigning to answer it.

While Luther had his eyes thus turned to Madrid, the storm seemed to be increasing around him. Fanaticism burst forth like a flame in Germany. Indefatigable in his efforts at persecution, Hochstraten had extracted sundry propositions from Luther's writings; these, at his request, the universities of Cologne and Louvain had condemned; and that of Erfurt, which still bore a grudge against Luther for having preferred Wittemberg to it, was about to follow their example. But this coming to the doctor's knowledge, he wrote so powerful a letter to Lange, that the Erfurt divines quailed under it and held their peace. Still, the condemnatory sentence pronounced by Cologne and Louvain was enough to inflame men's minds; and more than this, the priests of Misnia, espousing Emser's quarrel, openly asserted, as Melancthon relates, that the man who should slay Luther would be without sin.³ "Now is the time come," said Luther "when men will think they do service to Jesus

¹ The battle at Marignan, between Francis I. and the Swiss, was fought several years before that of Pavia, in the days of his prosperity, when Charles was still young and his grandfather Maximilian still reigning as emperor. Francis on that occasion gained a decisive victory, which he followed up by penetrating into Italy and by the conquest of Milan.—L. R.

² *Causam ipsam veritatis.* . . . (L. Epp. i. 392, 15th January, 1520.)

³ *Ut sine peccato esse cum censebant qui me interfecerit.* (L. Epp. i. 383.)

Christ, by putting us to death." Nor were these homicidal words to remain without effect.

"One day," says a biographer, "that Luther happened to be in front of the Augustinian monastery, a stranger holding a pistol concealed in his sleeve, came up to him and said, "Why do you thus go abroad quite alone?"—"I am in the hands of God," replied Luther, "he is my strength and my shield. What can mortal man do unto me?" "Whereupon," says the historian, "the unknown person grew pale and fled trembling."¹ Serra-Longa, the orator of the conference at Augsburg, wrote to the elector about the same time: "Let not Luther find any asylum in your highness's states; shunned by all, let him be stoned in the face of heaven; this will please me more than your sending me ten thousand crowns."²

But it was on the side of Rome chiefly that the mutterings of the tempest were to be heard. Valentine Teutleben, a Thuringian noble, vicar to the archbishop of Maintz and a zealous partisan of the popedom, now represented the elector of Saxony at Rome. Ashamed of the protection that the heretical monk received from his master, Teutleben perceived with impatience that by this imprudent conduct his mission was paralysed, and imagined that by working on the elector's fears he might induce him to abandon the rebellious divine. "People won't listen to me," he wrote to his master, "because of the protection you grant to Luther." But the Romans were mistaken when they thought they could alarm the wise Frederick. That prince knew that the will of God, and national commotions, were less easily resisted than the decrees of the papal chancery. He instructed his envoy to insinuate to the pope that, far from defending Luther, he had all along left him to defend himself; but besides this, that he had already asked him to leave Saxony and the university; that the doctor had declared himself ready to go, and that he would not have been then in the electoral states, had not the legate himself, Charles of Miltitz, besought the prince to keep Luther near him, under the apprehension that were he to escape into other countries, he might act with even less

¹ Was kan mir ein Mensch thun? (Keith, L. Umstände, p. 89.)

² Tenzel hist. Ber. ii. p. 168.

restraint than in Saxony.”¹ Frederick did more than this: he wished to enlighten Rome. “Germany,” he continues in his letter, “now possesses very many learned men, adepts in the various languages and sciences; the very laity begin to be intelligent and to like Holy Scripture; accordingly, should Dr. Luther be refused fair terms, it is much to be feared that peace may never be restored. Luther’s doctrine has struck deep root in a great many hearts. If, instead of refuting it by the testimonies of the Bible, an attempt shall be made to annihilate it with the thunderbolts of ecclesiastical authority, grievous scandals and the most destructive and terrible revolts, will be the result.”² As the elector had the fullest confidence in Luther, he made Teutleben’s letter be communicated to him, together with another that he had received from the cardinal St. George. The perusal of these could not fail to affect the Reformer, who instantly perceived the jeopardy of his position, and his soul was momentarily overwhelmed at the prospect. But such were the very moments in which his faith revealed itself in all its vigour. Weak as he often felt himself, and ready to despond, it was in the midst of the tempest that he seemed to rise and appear greater than ever. Much did he desire to be delivered from such trials, but he fully understood the price at which repose was offered to him. . . . and he spurned it from him with indignation. “Hold my peace,” said he; “I am disposed to do so, if men would let me, that is, if others were enjoined to remain silent too. If any man envy the offices I hold, let him take them. If any man want to destroy my writings, let him burn them. I am ready to keep myself quiet, provided it do not imperatively follow, that the truths of the Gospel be consigned to silence too.”³ I ask not for the hat of a cardinal; I ask not for gold or for anything that Rome accounts of value. There is nothing whatever which may not be obtained from me, provided they leave the way of salvation open to Christians.⁴ All

¹ Da er viel freyer und sicherer schreiben und handel möchte was er wollte.
 . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 298.)

² Schreckliche, grausame, schädliche und verderbliche Empörungen erregen.
 (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 298.)

³ Semper quiescere paratus, modo veritatem evangelicam non jubeant quiescere.
 (L. Epp. i. p. 462.)

⁴ Si salutis viam christianis permittant esse liberam, hoc unum peto ab illis, ac præterea nihil. . . . (Ibid.)

their threats terrify me not, nor shall all their promises seduce me."

Animated with such sentiments Luther soon recovered all his warlike ardour, and preferred the Christian warfare to the stillness of solitude. A single night suffices to re-awaken in him his desire for the subversion of Rome. "I have taken my stand," he wrote the day following, "I despise the fury of Rome, I despise her favour, and have no wish for reconciliation or communion with her for ever.¹ Let her condemn and burn what I have written! I, in my turn, will publicly condemn and burn the pontifical law, that nest of all heresies. The moderation which to this hour I have shown, has been useless; I renounce it!"²

His friends were far from being equally tranquil. Great was the consternation at Wittemberg. "We are in a state of extraordinary expectancy," said Melancthon. "I would rather die than part from Luther.³ If God help us not, we perish." "Our Luther is still alive," he writes a month later, in his anxiety; "may it please God that he live a long while yet, for the Roman sycophants are doing everything they can to secure his destruction. Pray for the life of this sole avenger of holy theology."⁴

These prayers were not to remain unheeded. The warnings which the elector had instructed his agent to give to Rome, were not without foundation. Luther's voice had found an echo in all quarters, in the cabins of the poor, in the monasteries, in the burgesses' houses, the castles of the nobility, the academies, and even in kings' palaces. He had told duke John: "Let my life have availed for the conversion of but a single sinner, and I shall willingly consent to the destruction of all my books."⁵ It was not a single man, it was a mighty multitude that had found the light in the writings of the humble doctor; hence everywhere, also, you could find men ready to protect him. The sword that was to smite him was forging at the Vatican, but heroes were

¹ *Nolo eis reconciliari nec communicare in perpetuum.* . . . (Ibid. p. 466, 10th July, 1520.)

² Here we see how every thing in this great work came unsought and without any preconceived plan. Luther himself could at times be faint-hearted in the prospect of the hardships to which he was exposed. What had his enemies known how to take advantage of this! But that was not to be. Providence willed it otherwise. And his courage soon revived.—L. R.

³ *Emori mallim, quam ab hoc viro evelli.* (Corp. Reform. p. 160, 163.)

⁴ *Martinus noster spirat, atque utinam diu.* . . . (Ibid. p. 160, 208.)

⁵ L. Opp. (Leipz.) xvii. p. 392.

rising in Germany for the purpose of making a buckler of their bodies in his defence. At the moment when bishops were chafing with rage, when princes shut their mouths, when the people looked on in suspense, and when the thunder was muttering on the seven hills of Rome, God aroused the German nobility, and made them a bulwark for the protection of his servant.

Sylvester of Schaumburg, one of the most powerful knights of Franconia, sent his son at this period to Wittemberg with a letter for the Reformer. "You are in danger of losing your life," wrote Schaumburg. "Should the electors, princes, and magistrates, fail to protect you, I beseech you beware of betaking yourself to Bohemia, where very learned men have already had much to suffer. Come rather to me; I shall soon, if it please God, have gathered a force of more than a hundred gentlemen, and with their assistance, will be in a condition to preserve you from all danger."¹

Francis of Sickengen, that hero of his age,² whose dauntless courage we have already contemplated, loved the Reformer because he found him worthy of his love, and also because he was hated by the monks.³ "My services, my property, and my body, all, in short, that I possess," he wrote to him, "is at your disposal. You wish to uphold Christian truth; in that I am ready to assist you." Harmuth of Cronberg held the same language.⁴ In fine, Ulric of Hutten, at once the poet and the gallant knight of the sixteenth century, ceased not to speak in favour of Luther. But what a contrast did these two men present! Hutten wrote to the Reformer: "It is with swords, and bows, and javelins, and bombs,⁵ that we must put down the devil's fury." On receiving such letters Luther exclaimed: "I would not that people should have recourse to arms and carnage in defending the Gospel. The world was vanquished by the Word; by the Word the Church was saved, and by the Word also she will be restored." "I do not slight his offers," said he

¹ Denn Ich, und hundert von Adel, die Ich (ob Gott will) aufbringen will, euch redlich anhalten. . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 381.)

² Equitum Germaniæ rarum decus, says Melancthon on this occasion. (Corp. Reform. i. p. 201.)

³ Et ob id invisus illis. (Ibid. p. 132.)

⁵ Ibid.

⁵ This must be a mistranslation on the part of the author, if, as Dr. Watson relates in his History of the reign of Philip II., bombs were invented only in the reign of that prince. See Watson's Philip II. vol. iii. p. 149. Tr.

further, on receiving the letter from Schaumburg which we have mentioned, but I would not lean on any protector but Christ.”¹ It was not thus that the pontiffs of Rome spoke when they waded through the blood of the Vaudois and Albigenses. Hutten saw the difference between Luther's cause and his, and accordingly he wrote to him with a noble candour: “As for me, my concern is with the things of men; but thou, towering far higher, art wholly given to the things of God;”² he then sets out to gain over to the truth, if it were possible, Ferdinand and Charles V.³

Thus as often as Luther's enemies threatened to overwhelm him, as often did his friends rise in his defence.⁴ “My bark,” says he, “floats hither and thither at the mercy of the winds and waves; . . . hope and fear prevail by turns; but what does it matter.”⁵ Nevertheless, his mind was not unaffected by the testimonies of friendship which he received. “The Lord reigns,” says he, “so evidently that he may be felt.”⁶ Luther saw that he was no longer alone; his words had borne fruit and the thought of this gave him fresh courage. Now that he had other defenders willing to brave the wrath of Rome, he needed not allow himself to be checked by a dread of compromising the elector, and while this gave him greater freedom of action, it made him more decided also. This was an important epoch in the development of Luther's character. “Rome must be made to know,” he writes to the elector's chaplain, “that although she might succeed by her threats in banishing me from Wittemberg, she would thus only make her case worse than it is. It is not in Bohemia—it is in the midst of Germany—that those are to be found who are ready to shield me from the papal thunders.

¹ Nolo nisi Christo protectore niti. (L. Epp. i. p. 148.)

² Mea humana sunt: tu perfectior, jam totus ex divinis pendes. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 175.)

³ Viam facturus libertati (cod. Bavar. veritati) per maximos principes. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 201.)

⁴ Milner mentions among the circumstances which tended greatly to encourage Luther about the commencement of 1520: 1. Melancthon's appearance against the papal advocates. 2. Several elaborate epistles of Erasmus, written about the same period, to persons of learning and eminence, representing Luther in the most respectful terms, and the substance of which may be found in Milner, vol. iv. pp. 344, 345. Tr.

⁵ Ita fluctuat navis mea: nunc spes nunc timor regnat. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 443.)

⁶ Dominus regnat ut palpare possimus. (Ibid. 451.)

If I have not yet done to my enemies all I am preparing for them, they must attribute it neither to my modesty nor to their tyranny, but to the name of the elector and to the prosperity of the university of Wittemberg, which I have been afraid to compromise: now that I have no such apprehension, it will be seen that I will throw myself with fresh vigour on Rome and her courtiers.”¹

And yet it was not on the great that Luther founded his hopes. After being often solicited to dedicate a book to duke John, the elector’s brother, he had done nothing of the kind. “I am afraid,” said he, “that this suggestion may have come from himself. Holy Scripture ought to be made to promote the glory of the name of God alone.”² Luther got the better of these fears, and dedicated to duke John his discourse on good works; one of his writings in which the Reformer very forcibly expounds the doctrine of justification by faith; that mighty truth, whose potency he valued above the sword of Hutten, the army of Sickingen, and the protection of the dukes and electors.

“The first, the noblest, the most sublime of all good works,” says he, “is faith in Jesus Christ.³ From this work all others ought to proceed: they are all the vassals of faith, and receive their efficacy from it alone.

“If a man find in his heart the assurance that what he does is agreeable to God, the work is good, were it no more than the lifting of a single straw; but if he have no such assurance, his work is not good, even although he should raise the dead. A pagan, a Jew, a Turk, a sinner, may do all other works; but to trust firmly in God, and to have the assurance of being pleasing to him—this is what the Christian confirmed in grace alone is capable of doing.

“A Christian who has faith in God, does all this with a free and joyful spirit; whereas the man who is not one with God, is full of anxieties and still in bondage; he asks himself in his anguish how many good deeds are required of him; he runs hither and thither; he questions this man and that man; he

¹ Sævius in Romanenses grassaturus. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 465.)

² Scripturam sacram nolim alicujus nomini nisi Dei servire. (L. Epp. i. p. 431.)

³ Das erste und höchste, alleredelste. . . gute Werck ist der Glaube in Christum. . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 394.)

no where finds peace, and does every thing against the grain and under the influence of fear.

“Consequently I have ever extolled faith. But in the world it is not so. There the essential matter is to have many works, works great, and high, and of all dimensions, without the least regard being had to their being animated by faith. People thus found their peace, not on God’s good pleasure, but on their own merits, that is, on sand. . . . (Matthew, vii. p. 27.)

“To preach faith, we are told, is to throw an obstacle in the way of good works; but although a man should of himself possess the strength of all men, or of all creatures,¹ this one obligation to live in the faith, would be too great a task for him ever to be able to accomplish. Were I to say to a sick person: Be restored to health and you will then have the use of your limbs, would any one say that I was forbidding him the use of his limbs? Ought not the return of health to precede his resuming his labours? So it is when we preach faith: it ought to precede works, in order that those works themselves may have any existence.

“Where is this faith to be found, say you, and how can a man receive it? This, in fact, is what it is of the utmost importance to know. Faith comes from Jesus Christ alone, freely promised and bestowed. . . .

“O man, place Christ before thee, and contemplate the display which God makes of his mercy in him, without being anticipated by any merit on thy part.² From this display of his grace, draw forth the belief and assurance that all thy sins are forgiven thee. Works cannot produce it. It flows from the blood, from the wounds, from the death of Christ; from these it gushes forth in the hearts of believers. Christ is the rock whence flow milk and honey.” (Deut. xxxii.)

As we cannot make the reader acquainted with all the writings of Luther,³ we have extracted some short fragments from

¹ Wenn ein Mensch tausend, oder alle Menschen, oder alle Creaturen wäre. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 398.)

² Siehe, also must du Christum in dich bilden, und sehen wie in Ihm Gott seine Barmherzigkeit dir fürhält und anbaut. . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 401.)

³ “If the least doubt could be entertained,” says Milner, “whether the Saxon Reformer was a man of acute understanding and of indefatigable industry, it would be easy to particularize some of his excellent productions during the

that on Good Works, because of the Reformer's own opinion of it. "It is in my judgment," says he, "the best of my published writings." And he then adds the following profound observation: "But I know that when I please myself in what I write, the infection of this bad leaven prevents it from pleasing others."¹ In sending this discourse to a friend, Melancthon accompanied it with these words: "Not one of all the Greek and Latin writers has come nearer to the spirit of St. Paul than Luther has done."²

III. Now there had grown up in the Church another evil besides the substitution of a system of meritorious works for the idea of grace and amnesty.³ A haughty power had arisen from amid the humble pastors of the flocks of Jesus Christ, and this usurped authority Luther was destined to attack. Amid all his disquietudes, he had found time in his retreat for studying the origin, the progress, and the usurpations of the popedom, and was confounded at the discoveries to which he was led. These he no longer hesitated to make known, and thus struck a blow which, like that of the rod of Moses of old, was to arouse a whole nation that had fallen asleep in the course of a long captivity. Even before Rome had time to publish her redoubtable bull, he hurled against her his declaration of war. "The time for remaining quiet is passed," said he, "the time to speak out is come!" On the 23d of June, 1520, he published his famous *Appeal to his Imperial Majesty and to the Christian nobility of the German nation, on the reformation of Christendom*.⁴

"It is not rashly," says he at the commencement, "that I undertake, I, a man of the people, to address myself to your lordships."⁵ The wretchedness and oppression that now overwhelm

years 1519, 1520, &c. which have not been mentioned. The established hierarchy had, as it could not fail to have, many supporters. The heretical innovator was attacked from all quarters, and it may be sufficient to add that Luther always answered his enemies with perspicuity and vigour, and in several instances with great brilliancy of wit and poignant sarcasm: never was it more truly said of any man, *That he was himself a host*." (Milner, vol. iv. p. 458.)

¹ *Erit meo judicio omnium quæ ediderim, optimum: quamquam scio quæ mihi mea placent, hoc ipso fermento infecta, non solere aliis placere.* (L. Epp. i. p. 431.)

² *Quo ad Pauli spiritum nemo propius accedit.* Corp. Ref. i. p. 202.)

³ See p. 20—36.

⁴ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 457—502.

⁵ "Some there were, and those the friends of Luther, who were startled at the boldness of the publication and considered it as the signal for war; but the more thinking and judicious part of mankind looked on this measure as the wisest

all the states of Christendom, and Germany in particular, force from me a cry of distress. I am constrained to call for help; I must see whether God will not bestow his Spirit on some man belonging to our country, and stretch forth his hand to our unhappy nation. God has given us a young and generous chief (the emperor Charles V.¹) and has thus filled our hearts with great expectations. But we must on our side do all that we can.

"Now, the first thing necessary is that we do not trust in our great strength or our profound wisdom. When a great work is begun in self-confidence, God subverts and destroys it. Frederick I., Frederick II., and many more emperors in whose presence the world trembled, have been trodden under foot by the popes, because they trusted more in their own might than in God. Their fall followed as a matter of course. In this war we have to fight against the powers of hell. To look for nothing from the force of arms, and humbly to trust in the Lord—to look to the distress of Christendom still more than to the crimes of the wicked—such is the manner in which it should be set about. In any other way the work may commence perhaps with fair appearances; but all at once, in the midst of the conflict, confusion will break in; mischievous spirits will cause immense disasters, and the whole world will swim in blood. . . . The more power people have, the more do they expose themselves, if they go not forward in the fear of the Lord."

After this opening, Luther goes on thus:

"The Romans have raised around them three ramparts to secure them against every kind of reformation. Have they been attacked by the temporal power? they have asserted that it had no jurisdiction over them, and that the spiritual power was superior to it. Have endeavours been made to bring them under the reprehension of Holy Scripture? they have replied that nobody could interpret it but the pope. Have they been threatened with a council? none but the Roman pontiff, they have said, can convoke one.

step, which, even in a mere worldly and prudential light, could possibly have been taken to render contemptible and abortive the expected fulminations of the Roman court." (Milner, vol. iv. p. 471.)

¹ Gott hat uns ein junges edles Blut zum Haupt gegeben. . . . (L. Opp. xvii. p. 457.)

“Thus have they put aside the three rods that should have corrected them, and have given themselves up to all wickedness. But now may God be our helper and give us one of the trumpets that will overturn the walls of Jericho! Let us beat down with our blast, those walls of paper and of straw with which the Romans have surrounded themselves, and let us take up rods for the punishment of the wicked by exposing the cunning devices of the devil to the light of day.”

Luther then begins his attack. He shakes to its foundations that papal monarchy which for ages had united in one body all the nations of the West under the sceptre of the Roman bishop. There is no separate caste of priests in Christianity—this was a truth of which the Church had been kept in ignorance for ages, and this is what he first powerfully demonstrates.

“It has been alleged,” thus speaks Luther, “that the pope, the bishops, the priests, and all who people the monasteries, form the estate spiritual or ecclesiastical; while the princes, nobles, burgesses, and peasantry, form the secular estate or laity. A very pretty account of things this! Let no man, however, be alarmed at it. All Christians constitute the spiritual estate, and the only difference among them, is that of the functions which they discharge. We have all one baptism, one faith, and it is this that constitutes the spiritual man. Unction, the tonsure, ordination, consecration by the pope or a bishop, may make a hypocrite but never can make a spiritual man. All of us are consecrated priests by baptism, as St. Peter says, *ye are priests and kings*; albeit that it appertaineth not to all to exercise such offices, inasmuch as none can appropriate what is common to all without the will of the community. Now, were it not that this consecration of God is upon us, the anointing by the pope never could make a priest. Were ten brothers, all king’s sons, and having equal rights of succession, to choose one from among them, to administer their common inheritance for the rest, all would be kings, though one only could be the administrator of their common power. Were some godly laymen to be banished into a desert, and, having no priest among them who had received consecration by a bishop, did they agree to choose out one from among themselves, married or single, for that office, that person would be as truly a priest as if all the bishops in the world had

consecrated him Thus were chosen Augustine, Ambrose, and Cyprian.

“Hence it follows that laymen and priests, princes and bishops, or, as it is said, ecclesiastics and laity, have nothing but their functions to distinguish them. They have all the same *status*, but all have not the same work to perform.

“If this be the case, then, why does not the magistrate correct the clergy? . . . The secular power has been ordained by God for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the protection of the good. It ought to be allowed, throughout all Christendom, to do its duty, whosoever it be that falls under its cognisance, pope, bishops, priests, monks, nuns, &c.: ‘*Let every soul be subject*¹ (consequently the pope among others) *unto the higher powers, for they bear not the sword in vain.*’”²

Having in like manner overthrown the other two walls, Luther reviews in succession all the abuses of Rome, exposing evils that had been notorious for ages, in a strain of eloquence altogether popular. Never did the language of opposition assume a nobler tone. The assembly to which Luther addressed himself was the church; the power whose abuses he attacked was the popedom, which had been pressing heavily for ages on the people of all lands; and the reformation which he loudly insisted for, could not fail to exert a mighty influence on all Christendom, and the whole world, as long as humanity itself should endure.

He begins with the pope. “It is horrible,” says he, “to see a man calling himself the vicar of Jesus Christ, displaying a

¹ πᾶσα ψυχή. Romans xiii. 1, 4.

² All that Luther says in this argument of the equality of Christians as spiritual priests and kings, and of the priesthood in particular as a ministry, exercised in the name of the whole community, accords with the truth, provided we keep in view that Christ is the head of that community, and that all be done on commission from him. Nor is it to be gainsayed that pope, priest, and all persons whosoever, in respect to temporal things, are subject to the secular powers: yet that those secular powers should overrule them in regard to their spiritual ministry, is contrary to the presupposed truth, that they exercise their ministry in the name of that whole community, of which princes and governors are only particular members, and that in the name of Christ; and thus as little as the priests can lord it over the magistrates, can the latter lord it over the priests or over the general body (of the church). Men easily go from one extreme into another in this respect, and it is not to be denied, that good as Luther's intention was in what he has said here, still he furnished too much ground for that political church-governing which is in our times doing so much mischief among Protestants. L. R.

magnificence such as no emperor even equals. Is this being like the poor Jesus or the humble St. Peter? We are told he is the lord of the world! But Christ, whose vicar he boasts of being, hath said, '*My kingdom is not of this world.*' And shall the kingdom of a vicar extend beyond that of his Lord?" . . .

Luther then goes on to depict the effects of papal domination. "Know you," says he, "what the cardinals are for? I would fain let you know. Italy and Germany have a great many religious foundations, and richly endowed ecclesiastical benefices. Now, how is this wealth to be brought to Rome? . . . Cardinals have been created; they have been appointed over religious houses, and to prelatures; and at this moment . . . Italy is all but a desert; the monasteries are ruined, the bishopricks devoured, the cities are decayed, their inhabitants are corrupted, religious worship is dying out, and preaching is abolished! . . . Why all this? Because all the wealth of the Church must go to Rome. Never could the Turk himself have so ruined Italy!"

Luther next addresses his own countrymen.

"And now that they have sucked the life's blood from their own nation they come into Germany; they begin mildly; but beware! Germany will soon become another Italy. Already we have some cardinals. Before these thick-headed Germans can comprehend what our object is, think they, neither bishoprick, monastery, parish-living, penny or farthing, will remain to them. Antichrist must possess the treasures of this world. Thirty or forty cardinals will be created in a day: Bamberg will be given to this one, the bishoprick of Wurzburg will be bestowed upon that; rich livings will be attached to them, until at length the churches and cities will be left desolate. And then the pope will say: I am the vicar of Jesus Christ, and pastor of his flocks. Let the Germans, therefore, be resigned!"

Here Luther kindles into indignation.

"How! we Germans, shall we submit to such robberies and extortions at the hands of the pope? If the kingdom of France has known how to defend itself,¹ wherefore should we allow ourselves to be thus outwitted and befooled? Ah! if it were but

¹ See note by Mr. Le Roy, p. 93.

our goods that they took from us! But they ravage the churches; they make spoil of Christ's sheep; they abolish God's worship, and render his word of none effect."

Here Luther makes an exposure of "the practices of Rome," which were employed for obtaining money and other returns from Germany. Annates, palliums, commendams, administrations, reversionary favours, incorporations, reservations, &c., he passes all under review, and then he says, "Let us make an effort to put a stop to so many desolations and hardships. If we would march against the Turks, let us begin with those Turks which are the worst of all! If we hang rogues and behead robbers, let us not allow Roman avarice to escape, which is the greatest of all rogues and robbers, and that, too, in the name of Jesus Christ! Who can bear it? Who can hold his peace? Has not everything the pope has, been stolen? For he neither has bought it nor has inherited it from St. Peter, nor earned it by the sweat of his brow. Whence, then, has it all come from?" . . .

For all these evils Luther suggests a cure. After an energetic exhortation to the nobles of Germany to put a stop to the depredations of Rome, he comes to the reformation of the pope himself. "Is it not laughable for the pope to pretend to be lawful heir of the empire? Who ever gave it him? Was it Jesus Christ when he said: *The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so* (Luke xxii. 25, 26.) How govern an empire and at the same time preach, pray, study, and take care of the poor? Jesus Christ forbade his ministers to take with them money or garments, because no man can discharge the ministry, unless exempt from other cares; and the pope, forsooth, would govern the empire and at the same time remain pope!" . .

Luther is not done with stripping the supreme pontiff of his pretensions: "Let the pope," says he, "renounce all kind of title to the kingdom of Naples and Sicily. He has no more right to it than I have. His possession of Bologna, Imola, Ravenna, the Romagna, the March of Ancona, &c. is unjust, and opposed to all the commandments of Jesus Christ. *No man, says St. Paul, that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life* (2 Tim. ii. 4). Yet the pope, who puts himself forth as chief in the gospel war, entangles himself more with the affairs of this life than any emperor or king does. We must disentangle him from all his

toil. Let the emperor place a Bible and a prayer book in the hands of the pope, so that the pope may leave kings to govern, while he betakes himself to preaching and prayer.”¹

Luther is as little a friend to the pope’s ecclesiastical power in Germany as he is to his temporal dominion in Italy. “Before all things else,” says he, “the pope’s legates, together with the pretended advantages they sell us for weighed out gold, and which are mere cheats, must be banished from all the countries of Germany. They take our money, and for what? For giving legal titles to ill gotten goods, for absolving from oaths, for teaching us disloyalty, for giving us lessons in sin, and leading us straight to hell. . . . Hearest thou that, O pope, not most holy but most sinful! . . . May God from the heights of his heaven, soon hurl thy throne into the infernal abyss!”

The Christian tribune goes on as he began. After having summoned the pope to his bar he points to all the abuses that follow in the train of the popedom, and offers to clear the Church floor of the sweepings that incumber it. He begins with the monks.

“And now I come to that heavy crew which promises so much and does so little. Now, don’t be angry, my good sirs! I mean well, and what I have to say is a truth at once sweet and bitter, to wit, that no more monasteries should be built for begging friars. Great God, we have but too many such, and would to God they were all levelled with the ground. . . . No good has ever come, or is ever likely to come, from vagrancy.”

The marriage of the clergy comes next in turn, and it is for the first time that Luther speaks of it.

“Into what a state have the clergy fallen, and how many priests are to be found burdened with wives, with children, and with remorse, while no one comes to their help! Let the pope and the bishops let pass what passes, and let go to ruin what is running to ruin, all well for them; but as for me, I would fain save my conscience, and desire to open my mouth without restraint: let pope, bishop, and who will, take offence if they will.

. . . I say then that according to the institution of Jesus

¹ Ihm die Billien und Betbücher dafür anzeigen . . . und er predige und bete. (L. Opp. xvii. p. 472.)

Christ and his apostles, every town should have a pastor, or bishop, and this pastor may have a wife, as St. Paul writes to Timothy: *Let the bishop be the husband of one wife*, (1 Tim. iii. 2), and as is still the practice in the Greek Church. But the devil has persuaded the pope, as St. Paul says to Timothy, (1 Tim. iv. 1—3) to forbid the clergy to marry. And hence have flowed woes in such number that to mention them all would be impossible. What then must we do? How save so many pastors against whom we can bring no charge but that they live with a woman to whom, with their whole heart, they desire to be lawfully united? Ah! let them save their consciences! let them take this woman as their lawful spouse, and live honestly with her, without disquieting themselves about the pope being pleased or displeased at it. Thy soul's salvation concerns thee more than tyrannical and arbitrary laws that never came from the Lord."

Thus did the Reformation propose to restore to the Church the purity of morals which she had lost. The Reformer continues :

"Let holidays be abolished and Sunday only be kept, or if you would keep the great Christian feasts, let it be but during the morning and let what remains be considered as working time. For as nothing has been done then but drinking, gambling, committing all sorts of sins, or remaining idle, God is much more sinned against on holidays than on the other days."

He next attacks the dedications of churches which, says he, are truly tavern affairs ; then he censures fasts and confraternities. Nor would he only extirpate abuses, he would also put an end to schisms: "It is time," says he, "that we were seriously considering the case of the Bohemians, that we were doing something for the suppression of hatred and envy, and that we were re-uniting ourselves to them." He suggests some excellent methods of conciliation, and adds: "Thus ought we to convince heretics by Scripture, as the ancient Fathers did—not vanquish them by fire. On the opposite system, public executioners would prove the most learned doctors in the universe. . . . Oh, would to God that, on both sides, we held out to each other the hand of fraternal humility rather than draw ourselves up in the feeling that we have rights and can assert them. Charity is more necessary than the popedom of Rome. I have now done all that I have been able to do. Should the pope or his people

oppose my suggestions, they shall be accountable for doing so. The pope ought to be ready to renounce the popedom with all his possessions and all his honours, could he thereby save a single soul. But he would rather see the universe go to wreck than allow a hairbreadth of his usurped power to be taken from him.¹ . . . I wash my hands from these things."

Luther next comes to the universities and the schools:

"I fear much," says he, "that the universities may prove but great gates to hell, if sedulous attention be not given to the explaining of Holy Scripture and engraving it on the hearts of the youths who attend them. I would advise no one to send his child where Holy Scripture does not hold the chief place. All must become corrupt where unceasing attention is not paid to the Word of God."^{2 3} Weighty words, which governments, the learned, and fathers, in all ages, should ponder well.

Towards the close of his harangue, he reverts to the empire and the emperor.

"The pope," says he, "being unable to lead about at will the ancient masters of the Roman empire, fancied he might despoil them of their title and authority, and give these to us Germans. Thus has it been done and we are become the pope's servants. For the pope has made himself master of Rome, and has compelled the emperor on oath never to reside there; hence the result is, that the emperor is emperor of Rome without Rome. We have the name, the pope has the cities and territories. We bear the title and the arms of the empire; the pope has the treasure, authority, privileges, and independence. The pope eats the fruit, while we amuse ourselves with the shell. Thus is it that the pride and tyranny of the Romans have ever abused our simplicity.

"But now, may God, who has given us such an empire, come to our aid. Let us act as may be expected from our name, our title, and our arms; let us guard our liberty! and let the

¹ Nun liess er ehe die Welt untergehen, ehe er ein Haarbreit seiner vermessenen Gewalt liesse abbrechen. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 483.)

² Es muss verderben, alles was nicht Gottes Wort ohn Unterlass treibt. (Ibid. 486.)

³ These words are no less applicable where the Scriptures are no longer employed at universities as the Reformers employed them, but where youth is instructed in the art of perverting Scripture and depriving it of its plain and simple meaning.—L. R.

Romans be taught to understand what God has transmitted to us by their instrumentality. They boast of having given us an empire. Well then, let us take what belongs to us. Let the pope hand over to us Rome and all else that he possesses of the empire. Let him put an end to his taxes and extortions! Let him give us back our independence, our power, our property, our happiness, our soul, and our body. Let the empire be made all that an empire ought to be, and let not princes be any longer constrained to lower their sword before the hypocritical pretensions of a pope!"

These words are more than powerful and vehement—they are fraught with the profoundest reason. Never had orator thus addressed the whole nobility of the empire and the emperor himself! Far from wondering that so many of the Germanic states withdrew from connection with Rome, may we not much more wonder that the whole of Germany did not rise in arms and wrest back that imperial power, the attributes of which the popes had imprudently placed on the head of its chief?

Luther winds up this bold harangue in these words:

"Methinks, indeed, I have pitched my voice too high, have proposed many things that will appear impossible, and have attacked many errors somewhat over fiercely. But what am I to do in such a case? better that the world should be angry with me than that God should! . . . At the worst, they can but take my life. I have repeatedly made offers of peace to my opponents. But God has compelled me through their instrumentality ever to open my mouth against them. I have still in reserve a song upon Rome. If their ears itch to hear it, I will sing it to them, and loudly too. . . Understandest thou, O Rome, what I would wish to tell thee?" . . .

Here there is probably an allusion intended to something that Luther had written on the pope, and which he had proposed to publish, but which never appeared. The rector Burkhard wrote at that time to Spengler: "There is still a little book *de execranda venere Romanorum*; but it is kept in reserve." The title promised that it would give the greatest offence, and we ought to rejoice that Luther had the moderation not to publish the work.

"If my cause be just," he continues, "it must be expected to

be condemned on earth and justified only by Christ in heaven. Let them come on then, pope, bishops, priests, monks, doctors! let them put forth all their zeal! let them pour out their utmost fury! Such are the very persons who may be expected to persecute the truth, as all ages have witnessed."

Whence could this monk have obtained such a clear insight into public affairs, which the states of the empire themselves often found it so difficult to elucidate? Whence did this German derive that courage which enabled him to raise his head from the midst of a nation that had been enslaved for centuries, and deal such rude blows to the popedom? What was the mysterious energy that animated him? Would not one say that he had heard the word addressed by God to a man in ancient times: *Behold I have made thy face strong against their faces—as an adamant, harder than flint, have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks.*¹

Addressed to the German nobility, this exhortation soon reached all for whom it was composed. It spread through Germany with inconceivable rapidity. Luther's friends trembled; Staupitz and they who, like him, wished to pursue mild methods, thought the blow too strong. "In our days," replied Luther, "whatever is treated calmly is speedily forgotten and nobody

¹ The reader will be struck with the applicability of these remarks to the character, conduct, and spoken and written addresses of John Knox. To faith and courage both Reformers added an intense conviction of the responsibility of national governments and aristocracies, in regard to the religion of the people and their own. Yet, strange to say, the legitimate consequence and crowning glory of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, in the judgment of many, is a political philosophy which would make public men, as such, totally indifferent to religion, even when, as in the case of France and Spain, nations have become almost incapable of any steady government, from the weakness or perversion of their religious feelings. Strange, that were a reformer such as Luther to appear now in either of those countries, and call upon the sovereign and chambers to put away religious corruptions, he would be told that the Lutheran Reformation had shut his mouth, by establishing religious indifferentism as an immutable principle of state, and had put the sole effectual remedy for national disorders quite beyond the reach of the nation's chiefs. Both popish and infidel writers are fond of tracing the sceptical philosophy of the eighteenth century to the Reformation, as if that philosophy had not infected Italy as early as the fifteenth, and France in the seventeenth centuries, though veiled in both countries under a seeming respect for the forms of the Romish Church. The reader may see to what shifts Romanists are put when they would ascribe an atheistic tendency to the Reformation, and disparage its political results, by consulting a work published in Paris in 1822: *De l'Influence de la Reformation de Luther sur la croyance religieuse, la politique et les progrès des lumières, par M^r Robelet, ancien chanoine de l'église cathédrale de Dijon.* Tr.

cares about it.”^{1 2} He at the same time manifested the most amazing simplicity and humility.³ He was ignorant of himself. “I know not what to say of myself,” he wrote. “Perhaps I am the forerunner of Philip (Melancthon). Like Elias, I prepare the way for him, in spirit and in power. And it is he who is one day to trouble Israel and the house of Ahab.”⁴

But there was no need of looking for another besides him who had already appeared. The house of Ahab was already shaken. The *Address to the German Nobility* made its first appearance on the 26th of June, 1520, and in a short while four thousand copies, a number unheard of at that time, had been sold. It com-

¹ *Quæ nostro seculo quiete tractantur, mox cadere in oblivionem. . . .* (L. Epp. p. 479.)

² It is no better in our own times, in which nobody possessing either temporal or spiritual power, pays any regard to earnest though modest representations. Now, too, a voice like that of Luther is called for, in order to establish the ameliorations that are so much needed.—L. R. Here the learned Hollander refers, no doubt, mainly to the Church to which he belongs, and in which such faithful and orthodox men as he have the double disadvantage of not only being outnumbered by others of a far lower stamp, but also of having no such means as the Church of Scotland enjoys, of testifying against corruptions and abuses in free assemblies. TR.

³ M. Michelet, himself a philosopher, and one of those who ascribe to Luther that intellectual emancipation (*affranchissement intellectuel*) which the Reformer would have been the loudest to repudiate, seems struck with the contrast, in point of humility, between those who thought freely in the sixteenth and their alleged legitimate successors, the free-thinkers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and it seems almost incredible that this contrast should not have led him to discover their fundamental, essential, and immutable differences. To a sublime passage from Luther's writings, where the Reformer speaks of the awful responsibility of those who raise their voices in the Church of God, and in the anticipation of the final judgment, says that he might well wish nothing but silence and everlasting oblivion for his writings, M. Michelet appends the following note:

“It is curious to compare these words with the very different ones of Rousseau in his confessions.

“Let the trumpet of the last judgment sound when it will; I will come with this book in my hand, and present myself in the presence of my sovereign judge. I will say confidently: Behold what I have done; what I have written, what I have been. . . . And now, let any one say, if he dare: *I was better than that man there.*”—Michelet *Memoires de Luther*, vol. i. p. 57.

The truth is, such contrasts are too natural and general to be very curious in individual instances. Thus we may contrast Luther's boldness to the pope, and frankness to the elector, with Voltaire's obsequiousness to the pope and to Frederick of Prussia—or Luther's profound humility with David Hume's or Gibbon's self complacency—or the lowly beginnings of the Reformation in confessions of sin, and prayers, and tears, followed by such vast and stable results, with the magniloquent vaunts of the revolutionary philosophers, and the drivelling imbecillity with which their successors croak and chatter amid the ruins they have made, but can neither replace nor repair. Robert Hall's dissection of sceptical principles in his celebrated Sermon on Modern Infidelity, might show M. Michelet that all these contrasts are perfectly natural, and spring from radical differences of principle. TR.

⁴ L. Epp. p. 478.

municated a mighty impulse to the whole people. The power, the animation, the clearness, the generous hardihood that reigned throughout it, made it quite a popular production. The people came to the conclusion that the man who could speak thus, must love them. The dim perceptions of many wise men were made clearer, and the usurpations of Rome were forced on the conviction of every mind. No one at Wittemberg doubted any longer that the pope was antichrist. The very court of the elector, circumspect and timid as it was, did not blame the Reformer; it waited for what would follow. But the nobles and the people could not wait. The nation bestirred itself. Roused by the voice of Luther, it was gained over to his views, and as he lifted his standard it rallied round him. Nothing could have helped on the Reformer more than did that publication. Alike in palaces, in castles, and in the houses of the burgesses, down to the very cottages, people were now prepared, and steeled as it were, against the condemnatory sentence which was ready to burst upon the prophet of the people. All Germany was in a flame, and the bull might come when it pleased—it was not by it that the conflagration could be extinguished.

IV. All was now preparing at Rome for the condemnation of the man who had dared to defend the freedom of the Church. For a long while people had been passing their lives there in proud neglect of danger. Long had Leo X. been charged by the monks of Rome with being indifferent to all things but luxury and pleasure; making the chase, the theatre, and music¹ his grand occupations, while the Church was left to crumble into ruins. Now, however, Dr. Eck had come from Leipsick, to rouse the dormant might of the Vatican, and pope, cardinals, monks, all Rome in short, awoke at his call, and began to bethink themselves how they might save the popedom.

Rome, in fact, was now required to adopt the severest measures. The gauntlet had been thrown down to her, and a death-struggle must necessarily follow. Luther no longer attacked the abuses only of the Roman pontificate; he now assaulted the pontificate itself; and at his summons the pope behaved meekly to vacate his throne, and re-assume his ancient character of

¹ E sopra tutto musico eccellentissimo, e quando el canta con qualche uno, lo fa donar cento e piu ducati. . . (Zorsi M. S. C.)

simple pastor, or bishop, of the banks of the Tiber. All the dignitaries of the Roman hierarchy were called to renounce their riches and secular glory, and to sink to the condition of elders and deacons of the churches of Italy. All that gorgeous display, and all that worldly might, which had now for ages been dazzling the West, must thus have vanished, and been succeeded by the humble and simple worship of the first Christians. God alone was equal to the task of accomplishing such things: one day He will accomplish them; but they could not be expected to be done by men. And even granting that a pope should have been found so disinterested, and so bold, as to desire the overthrow of the ancient and sumptuous edifice of the Roman Church, thousands of priests and bishops would have put forth their hands to prevent its fall. The pope received the powers of the popedom only under the express condition of preserving what was entrusted to him. Rome considered herself appointed by God to govern the Church, so that no one could wonder at her now being prepared to strike the most terrible blows. And yet she hesitated at first. Several cardinals, and the pope himself, were not for adopting severe measures. The able Leo had the penetration to see that a sentence, the execution of which depended on the very doubtful goodwill of the civil power, might seriously compromise the authority of the Church. He saw, besides, that the violent measures already employed had only aggravated the evil. Was it not possible that this Saxon monk might be gained over? said the politicians of Rome. Shall all the power of the Church, and all the artifices of Italy, go for nought? We must again try negotiation.

But powerful as were the obstacles that Eck had to encounter, he neglected nothing that might prevent what he regarded as impious concessions. Traversing Rome in all directions, he breathed out his wrath and called for vengeance. He was promptly joined by the fanatical part of the monks, and on the strength of this new alliance, he renewed his importunities with the pope and cardinals. In his own view all idea of conciliation was impossible. "Any such hope," said he, "is a mere reverie with which people would lull themselves asleep." But he knows the danger, for he has personally encountered this audacious monk. He knows that not a moment must be lost in cutting off this gangrened limb, else the disease may infect the whole body. The

choleric combatant of Leipsick met objection after objection, and found it difficult to persuade the pope.¹ He would fain save Rome in spite of itself; he left no means untried; he passed whole hours of deliberation in the pontiff's cabinet,² and strove to rouse to action the court and the monasteries, the people and the Church. "Eck is about to impetrate the abysses of the abyss against me," said Luther, "he will set fire to the forest of Lebanon."³ In the end he carried his point, and the men of policy were overborne in the pope's councils by fanatics. Leo gave way, Luther's condemnation was resolved upon, and Eck at length breathed free. His pride was gratified at the thought that he had been the instrument of accomplishing his heretical rival's ruin, and hence of saving the Church, "It was well," says he, "that I came at this time to Rome, for Luther's errors are little known here. It will one day be understood what this cause owes to me."⁴

Thus did God deliver over the doctors of Rome to a spirit of infatuation. A complete separation now behoved to take place between truth and error, and error was to originate the breach. Had any accommodation of matters taken place, it would only have been at the expense of truth; now, to have taken from her any part of her completeness, would have been to secure her total annihilation. She is like one of those insects whose death is said to follow certainly on their losing a single antenna. She must maintain her integrity if she would put forth all the energy required for her making extensive and saving conquests, and if she would propagate herself in future ages. The mingling of a little error with truth, is like throwing a grain of poison into a large quantity of food; that grain suffices to change the whole nature of the food; and the result will be slow but certain death. They who guard the doctrine taught by Christ against the foes that assault it, watch with a jealous vigilance over the most advanced outworks as well as over the body of the fortification; for the moment the enemy makes himself master of the least of

¹ Sarpi Hist. of the Council of Trent.

² Stetimus nuper, papa, duo cardinales et ego per quinque horas in deliberatione. . . . Eckii Epistola 3 Maii. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 48.)

³ Impetraturus abyssos abyssorum . . . succensus saltum Libani. (L. Epp. i. p. 421, 429.)

⁴ Bonum fuit me venisse hoc tempore Romam. . . . (Epist. Eckii.)

these positions, he is not far from making a conquest of the whole. At the period we have now reached, the Roman pontiff decided that there should be a breach in the Church; and the fragment that fell to his lot, magnificent as it may be, uselessly conceals under its pompous ornaments the deleterious principle that has attacked it. There only is there life, where there is the Word of God. With all his courage Luther would likely have held his peace, had Rome consented to be quiet and had she made some apparent concessions. But God did not abandon the Reformation to be disposed of by the feeble heart of a man, and Luther was in the hands of a Being who saw more clearly than he could do. Divine Providence employed the pope as the instrument of snapping asunder all those ties that connected the past with the future, and of throwing the Reformer into a career at once new, unknown, and doubtful in his eyes, and the first approaches to which he could not of himself have discovered. The pontifical bull was the writing of divorcement, sent by Rome to the pure Church of Jesus Christ, in the person of one who was at that time her humble but faithful representative; and that Church accepted it, in order that from that very hour she might hold of no Head but Him who is in heaven.

While preparations were so fiercely set about at Rome for the condemnation of Luther, a humble priest, residing in one of the simple towns of Switzerland, and who had never had any ties with the Reformer, was deeply moved to think of the stroke that impended over him; and while the friends of the Wittemberg doctor trembled and held their peace, this son of the Swiss mountains resolved to put forth his utmost efforts against that formidable bull. His name was Ulrick Zwingli. He had a friend in William des Faucons, secretary to the pope's legate in Switzerland, and in the latter's absence charged with the management of Roman affairs. The *interim nuncio* had said to him a few days before: "As long as I shall live you may reckon on my doing for you, all that you could look for from a true friend." Trusting to these words, the Swiss priest repaired to the office of the Roman nuncio, (this we may infer at least from one of his letters). In his own case he dreaded not the dangers incurred by those who held the Gospel faith; for he knew that the disciple of Jesus Christ should at all times be prepared to sacrifice his

life. "All that I ask of Christ for myself," said he to a friend whom he had made the confidant of his solicitude with respect to Luther, "is that I may be able to support the evils that await me with the courage of a man. I am a vessel of clay in his hands; let Him break me or strengthen me as it pleases Him."¹ But the Swiss gospeller was alarmed for the Christian Church, should so formidable a blow descend upon the Reformer. He strove to persuade the representative of Rome to enlighten the pope, and to use every means in his power to prevent Luther's being smitten with excommunication.² The very dignity of the holy see itself, he told him, was interested in this; for should matters be carried thus far, Germany, in the warmth of her enthusiasm for the Gospel and for the doctor who is proclaiming it, will despise the pope and his anathemas.³ This step proved unavailing; it would seem even that it came too late, the blow being already struck. Such was the first occasion on which the paths of the Saxon doctor and the Swiss priest first met. We shall have to return to the latter in the course of this history, and will see him gradually open out and grow up until he becomes of a lofty stature in the Church of the Lord.

Luther's condemnation once determined on, new difficulties were started in the consistory. The divines were for proceeding at once to the launching of the anathema; the jurisconsults, on the contrary, were for beginning with a summons. "Was not Adam," said they to their colleagues, the divines, "first summoned? *Adam, where art thou?*" said the Lord. It was the same with regard to Cain. *Where is thy brother Abel?* was the Lord's demand." To these strange arguments from Holy Scripture, the canonists added motives derived from the law of nature: "The evidence in proof of a crime" said they, "never can deprive a criminal of the right of defence."⁴ One loves to find these principles of justice in a Roman congregation. But such scruples failed to bring over the divines at the meeting; influenced only by

¹ Hoc unum Christum obtestans ut masculo omnia pectore ferre donet, et me figulinum suum rumpat aut firmet ut illi placitum sit. (Zwinglii Epistolæ curante Schulero et Schulthessio, p. 144.)

² Ut pontificem admoneat, ne excommunicationem ferat. (Zwinglii Epistolæ, curant Schulero et Schulthessio, p. 144.)

³ Nam si feratur auguror Germanos cum excommunicatione pontificem quoque contempturos. (Zwinglii, Epp. curante Schulero et Schulthessio, p. 144.)

⁴ Sarpi, Hist. Council of Trent, i. p. 12.

their passions, their sole thought was how to go quickly to work. It was at length agreed to proceed immediately to the condemnation of Luther's doctrine; but as for him and his adherents, they were allowed a term of sixty days, after which, if they did not retract, they were all *ipso facto* to be smitten with excommunication. De Vio, who had returned from Germany in bad health, made himself be carried into the meeting. He was unwilling to forego this petty triumph, which served as some consolation to him. Though beaten at Augsburg, he put himself forward in Rome at least as condemning this indomitable monk, in dealing with whom he had witnessed the failure at once of his learning, tact, and authority. Luther was no longer there to reply, and De Vio therefore felt himself strong. It was on the 15th of June, that the sacred college passed sentence of condemnation, and approved of the famous bull.

"Arise, Lord," said the Roman pontiff, speaking at that solemn moment as vicar of God and head of the Church, "arise, be judge in thine own cause; remember the shame with which insensate men overwhelm thee all the day. Arise, O Peter! remember thy Holy Roman Church, mother of all the churches, and mistress of the faith! Arise, O Paul! for behold a new Porphyry who attacks thy doctrines and the holy popes, our predecessors. Arise, in fine, assembly of all the saints! Holy Church of God! and intercede with God Almighty."

The pope then quotes as pernicious, scandalous, and venomous, forty-one propositions of Luther's, in which the latter expounds the sound doctrines of the Gospel. Among these we find the following:

"To deny that sin remains in the infant after baptism, is to trample under foot both St. Paul and our Lord Jesus Christ." ¹

¹ Luther's defence of the doctrine he taught on this head, in its direct appeal to scripture and experience, clearly shows what a difference there already was between the theology of the schoolmen and that of the Reformers: Paulus Rom. 7. dicit. Concupiscentiam nesciebam esse peccatum nisi lex diceret: Non concupisces. Hic sine dubio claret, concupiscentiam esse peccatum, At quis est hominum qui concupiscentiam non sentit, postquam adoleverit, quamvis baptisatus, cum hic apostolus, nedum baptisatus, suam concupiscentiam accuset? Unde ergo hoc peccatum nisi ex nativitate carnis, etiam post baptismum remanens?

"Atque ne quis putet Apostolum in persona aliorum loqui, Gala. 5. ad eos qui spiritu vivebant, generali sententia dicit: Si Spiritu vivimus spiritu et ambulemus. Quid erat necesse mandare, ut spiritu ambulent, qui spiritu vivunt, si non superest peccatum carnis, quod crucifigant? &c. See Assortio. omni

“A new life is the best and the most sublime penitence.”

“The burning of heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Ghost,” &c. &c.

“From the hour of the publication of this bull,” continues the pope, “bishops ought carefully to seek out the writings of Martin Luther that contain errors, and to burn them in a public and solemn manner, in the presence both of clergy and laity. As for Martin himself, good God! what have we not done? Imitating the goodness of Almighty God, we are ready, nevertheless, to receive him again into the bosom of the Church, and we allow him sixty days for him to send us his retractation in a writing signed by two prelates; or, as would indeed be pleasanter for us, for him to come himself to Rome, so that no one should entertain any doubt of his obedience. Meanwhile, and from this very instant, he ought to relinquish preaching, teaching, and writing, and to deliver his works to the flames. And if he fail to retract within the space of sixty days, we condemn him for the present, both him and his adherents, as public and obstinate heretics.” The pope then pronounces a great many excommunications, curses, and interdicts against Luther and his abettors, with an order to seize their persons and bring them to Rome.^{1 2} It is easy to guess what would have become of those generous confessors of the Gospel in the dungeons of the popedom.

Thus was the lightning collecting over Luther's head; the bull made its appearance, and never for ages had Rome opened her mouth to condemn, without her arm being raised to inflict a death-blow. The murderous message was about to wing its way from the seven hills till it reached the Saxon monk in his cell. The moment was well chosen. It might be presumed that the

articul. D. M. L. per Bullam Leonis X., damnat. Anno 1520. at page 296 of 2d vol. of Luther's Works. Jena 1581. Tr.

¹ For many interesting details with respect to what may be called the anti-heretical jurisprudence of the popedom, the reader may consult: “A Discourse concerning the Laws, Ecclesiastical and Civil, made against Hereticks by Popes, Emperors, and Kings, Provincial and General Councils, approved by the Church of Rome,” &c. &c. first published, it would appear, in 1682, and republished at Dublin in 1723. Happily with regard to heresy in general, according to its views of heresy, weakness now compels the popedom to employ the policy of its brief on the subject of mixed marriages, issued to the clergy of Austria on May 22d 1841, *mala illa patienter solet dissimulare*: “these evils it is wont patiently to dissemble.” Tr.

² Sub prædictis pœnis, præfatum Lutherum, complices adherentes, receptatores et fatuatores, personaliter capiant et ad nos mittant. (Bulla Leonis, loc. cit.)

new emperor, with so many reasons for cultivating the friendship of the pope, would hasten to deserve it by sacrificing an obscure monk, so that already Leo X., the cardinals, and all Rome doubtless exulted at the thought of seeing their foe at their feet.

V. While the inhabitants of the eternal city were in this state of commotion, more tranquil scenes were taking place at Wittemberg. There Melanchthon was shedding a soft yet luminous radiance over from fifteen hundred to two thousand auditors who had flocked to his prelections from Germany, England, the Low Countries, France, Italy, Hungary, and Greece. He was four and twenty years old and not an ecclesiastic. Not a family in Wittemberg to which the visits of this most amiable and learned professor were not acceptable. Foreign universities, and Ingolstadt in particular, would fain have allured him into their service, and as a means of engaging him to remain with them, his Wittemberg friends wished him to marry. With every wish that his dear Philip should find a suitable companion, Luther openly declared that he would give no advice in such a matter, so that others became his counsellors with regard to it. The young doctor was chiefly in the habit of visiting the house of burgomaster Krapp, who belonged to an ancient family, and whose daughter Catherine was a person of sweet disposition and great sensibility. Melanchthon was encouraged to ask her in marriage, but the young devotee to learning was immersed in books and would hear of no other favourite. His Greek authors and his Testament were to him the richest treats. The arguments of his friends he met by other arguments. At length a consent was wrung from him. His friends made all the necessary arrangements for him, and he received Catherine for his wife. His reception of her was very cold,¹ and he said with a sigh: "So, such is the will of God! I must relinquish my studies and my joys, to follow the advice of my friends."² Yet he appreciated Catherine's good qualities. "The young woman," he said, "has such a character, and has had such an education, as I could have asked from God. *δεξιᾷ ὁ θεὸς τεκμαίροιο.*³ She certainly deserved a better husband." The preliminaries were

¹ *Uxor enim datur mihi non dico quam frigenti.* (Corp. Ref. i. p. 211.)

² *Ego meis studiis, mea me voluptate fraudo.* (Ibid. i. p. 265.)

³ May God, by his right arm, make the matter end well! (Ibid. i.)

settled in the month of August; the parties were betrothed to each other on the 25th of September, and the marriage was solemnized about the end of November. Old John Luther came to Wittemberg on this occasion with his daughters,¹ and many learned men and persons of distinction were present at the ceremony.

The young wife was as affectionate as the professor seemed cold. Ever anxious about her husband, Catharine took alarm the moment she saw the appearance of danger threaten an object so dear to her; and when Melanchthon proposed to take any step of a nature likely to compromise him, she overwhelmed him with her entreaties to change his purpose. It was on such an occasion that Melanchthon wrote: "I could not but submit to her weakness. . . . Such is our lot." How many instances of unfaithfulness in the Church have had a like origin. Possibly we have to blame Catherine's influence for that timidity and those alarms, for which her husband has so often been reproached. Catherine was no less tender a mother than she was a loving wife. She gave bountifully to the poor. "O God, forsake me not when old and grey headed:" such was the ordinary sigh of this godly but timorous soul. Melanchthon was soon gained over by his wife's affection, and needed only to taste the sweets of domestic life in order to enjoy them. He was formed for such endearments, and never felt himself so happy as when with his Catharine and his children. A French traveller, having one day found the "master of Germany" lulling a babe asleep with one hand and holding a book in the other, drew back in amazement. But Melanchthon, without putting himself out of sorts, expatiated so warmly on the value of infants in the eye of God, that the foreigner left the house a wiser man, said he, than he had entered it.

Melanchthon's marriage gave a domestic fireside to the Reformation, and from that time forth Wittemberg contained one family at least, whose house was ever open to all who loved the new life. Immense crowds of foreigners flocked to it.² People came to Melanchthon about an infinite variety of matters, and

¹ Parentes mei cum sororibus nuptias honorarunt Philippi. (L. Epp. i. p. 528.)

² Videres in ædibus illis perpetuo accedentes et introeuntes et discedentes atque exeuntes aliquos. (Camerar. Vita Melancht. p. 40.)

the established rule of the house was, that none should go away unsatisfied.¹ The youthful professor was particularly expert at putting himself out of the question when there was any good to be done. If he ran short of money, he would quietly take his silver plate and sell it, caring little about losing it, provided he might have wherewithal to relieve the distressed. "Accordingly, it would have been impossible for him to provide for the wants of himself and his family," says his friend Camerarius, "had not a divine and invisible blessing provided him from time to time with the means." He was extremely good natured. Having in his possession some antique gold and silver coins, with figures and inscriptions, he was one day showing these to a foreigner who had come to visit him. "Take," said Melanchthon, "which you like best." "I should like to have them all," said the stranger. "I admit," said Philip, "that this unreasonable request offended me at first: nevertheless, I let him have them all."²

Melanchthon's writings were redolent of classical antiquity, not however so as that the good odour of Christ did not exhale from all parts of them, giving them a charm that cannot be expressed. There is not a letter of his to his friends that does not contain some allusion, introduced in the most natural manner, to the wisdom of Homer, Plato, Cicero, and Pliny, Christ remaining ever his Master and his God. Spalatin having asked him to explain those words of Jesus Christ, *Without me ye can do nothing* (John xv. 5), Melanchthon referred him to Luther. "*Cur agam gestum spectante Roscio?* to speak with Cicero,"³ says he. He then proceeds thus. "This passage signifies that we ought to be absorbed with Christ, so that we no longer act, but that Christ lives in us. As the divine nature has been incorporated with men in Christ, so must man be incorporated with Christ by faith."⁴

¹ Et domus disciplina erat ut nihil cuiquam negaretur. (Ibid.)

² Sed dedisse nihilominus illos. (Ibid. p. 43.)

³ Why should I declaim in the presence of Roscius? (Corp. Reform. Ep. 13th April, 1520.)

⁴ Union with Christ is the soul of the doctrine of the Reformers, and it was the very soul, also, of their individual lives, as we see in the case of Melanchthon. Therefore, too, was the union of the Godhead with humanity in the person of Christ so momentous a matter in their regard. Here all intimately hangs together; and it must not be thought surprising that when people think they can suffice for themselves, and declare any such union with Christ to be a piece

This illustrious man of letters habitually went to bed soon after supper. By two or three o'clock in the morning he was at work,¹ and it was during those early hours that his best works were written. His manuscripts usually lay exposed on his table within reach of all who came and went, so that several of them were stolen. After inviting some friends to his house, he would request one or other of them, when the cloth was removed, to read some little composition in prose or in verse. In travelling he always took a few young men along with him, and with them he would converse so as to be at once instructive and amusing. When tired of talking, each would repeat in his turn passages from the ancient poets. He was often ironical, but it was an irony ever tempered with great mildness. "He pricks and cuts," said he of himself, "yet without doing any harm,"

His ruling passion was learning, and his life's grand object the diffusion of literature and intelligence. Let us not forget that literature for him was, first, the Holy Scriptures, and next only, the learning of the pagans. "I apply myself," said he, "to one thing only, that is, the defence of literature. We ought by our example to inflame the young with admiration for literature, and to make them love it for its own sake and not for the profit that may be derived from it. The ruin of literature brings along with it the desolation of all that is good: both religion and morals—the things of God and the things of man.² The better a man is, the more ardently will he desire to save literature, for he knows that of all plagues ignorance is the most pernicious."

Some time after his marriage Melanchthon went into the Palatinate, to Bretten, that in company with Camerarius and other friends, he might pay a visit to his affectionate mother. As soon as he descried his native town, he dismounted his horse, threw himself on his knees, and thanked God for permitting him to see it again. Margaret, on embracing her son, almost

of mysticism, they fall into dreadful errors with respect to his person and work, and bring down everything to the limits of their own petty (*lit.* small-spirited) comprehensions. But what good can such men do in a church which has again fallen so low, after having been restored from her former fall by Reformers having Christ and his Spirit in them, and by truths so full of life as these.—L. R.

¹ Surgebat mox aut non longo intervallo post mediam noctem. (Camerar., p. 56.)

² Religionem, mores, humana divinaque omnia labefactat litterarum inscitia. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 207. 22d July, 1520.)

fainted for joy. She would have had him remain at Bretten, and urgently besought him not to forsake the faith of his fathers. In this respect Melanchthon excused himself, but took care so to word what he said as not to wound his mother's conscience. He found it very hard to part from her, and whenever a traveller brought him news about his native place, he felt delighted, "as if he had been taken back," said he, "to the joys of his childhood." Such, at heart, was one of the greatest organs of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century.

Meanwhile, the domestic scenes and studious activity of Wittemberg, were disagreeably interrupted by a tumult. The students came to blows with the citizens. On this occasion the rector displayed much want of firmness. We may well suppose what must have been Melanchthon's distress at seeing such excesses committed by the disciples of polite letters. As for Luther, he was indignant. He scorned that false condescension by which some would have sought to influence the rioters, and was cut to the heart¹ at the thought of the disgrace in which such disorders must involve the university. Entering the pulpit he preached with much force against those seditious doings, and urged both parties to submit to the magistrates.² His discourse produced much exasperation. "Satan," said he, "unable to assail us from without, would fain injure us from within. I fear him not; but I fear that God's wrath may strike us, because of our inadequate reception of his Word. During these last three years I have been exposed thrice to great dangers: in 1518 at Augsburg, in 1519 at Leipsick, and now in 1520 at Wittemberg. It is neither by wisdom nor by arms that the work of renewing the Church will be accomplished, but by humble prayers and by an unwavering faith, as by these we obtain Christ to be with us.³ O my friends, join your prayers with mine, that the evil spirit may not make this small spark the means of kindling a vast conflagration."

VI. But combats still more terrible awaited Luther. Rome now brandished the sword wherewith she was to smite the

¹ Urit me ista confusio academix nostræ. (L. Epp. i. p. 467.)

² Commendans potestatem magistratuum. (Ibid.)

³ . . . Nec prudentiâ, nec armis, sed humili oratione et forti fide, quibus obtineamus Christum pro nobis. (Ibid. p. 469.)

Gospel. Yet the Reformer quailed not at the noise of the condemnation that hung over him; far from that, his courage rose under it. Parrying the thrusts of that haughty power, cost him little uneasiness; it was by dealing the most terrible ones himself that he best could nullify those of his adversaries. While the transalpine congregations were fulminating their anathemas against him, he wished to transport the sword of the Word into the midst of the tribes of Italy. Letters from Venice spoke of the favour with which Luther's views were received there. He felt a burning desire to send the Gospel across the Alps. Evangelists had to be obtained who might convey it thither. "I could wish" said he, "that we had living books, that is to say, preachers,¹ and that we could every where multiply and protect them, so as to make the knowledge of divine things pass among the people. The prince could do nothing more worthy of himself. Were the people of Italy to receive the truth, our cause would then be safe beyond attack." It does not appear that this project of Luther's was ever realised. At a later period, indeed, evangelical men, including Calvin himself, spent some time in Italy, but for the present Luther's design remained unaccomplished. He had addressed himself to one of the mighty ones of the earth; the result might have been very different had he made his appeal to men in humble stations but full of zeal for the kingdom of God. At that time people were possessed with the idea that all must be done by governments, and the associating together of simple individuals, a power now working such wonders in Christendom, was almost unknown.²

¹ Si vivos libros, hoc est concionatores possemus multiplicare. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 491.)

² And may it not be insufficiently understood still? True; great things are now in course of accomplishment by the union of individual persons, not invested with either temporal or spiritual powers. This is what the worthy author refers to. But still it is by a combination of powers that they effect this. Persons of rank and influence are eagerly associated with such undertakings, or placed at their head. Would such efforts find much countenance if undertaken or promoted by uninfluential though well meaning persons alone, acting independently of others? Or would they not be considered and condemned as hazardous and rash, just because unsupported by any human power or rank? And yet such efforts would most resemble those of the earliest times of Christianity.—L. R. Courting the patronage of the wealthy and influential, is certainly a grievous defect in almost all the religious associations to which both the author and his Dutch commentator refer. But a better remedy than that suggested by the latter, seems to lie in Christians uniting to purify the churches in which their lot is cast, and to engage them in such noble efforts as that which occupied Luther's thoughts in regard to Italy, as churches, consisting of persons of all ranks and conditions, and addressing all

Though Luther did not succeed in his projects for disseminating the truth at a distance, he was not the less zealous in preaching it himself. It was now that he pronounced at Wittenberg his discourse on the holy mass.¹ He there attacked the numerous sects of the Roman Church, and with the strongest reason reproached it for its want of unity. "The multiplicity of laws spiritual," says he, "has filled the world with sects and divisions. Priests, monks, and laity, have come to hate each other more than the Christians and the Turks. What am I saying? Nay, priests among themselves, and monks among themselves, are deadly enemies. The unity and the love of Christ are things gone by." He next attacks the idea that the mass is a sacrifice and has any efficacy of itself. "What is best," says he, "in every sacrament, and consequently in the supper, is God's Word and promises. Without faith in that word and those promises, the sacrament is dead; it is a body without a soul, a vase without wine, a purse without money, a type without its accomplishment, a letter without spirit, a jewel-box without jewels, a sheath without a sword."

Luther's voice, however, was not confined within the walls of Wittenberg, and although he found no missionaries to convey his instructions afar, God provided one of a new kind. Printing was to take the place of evangelists. The press was to open a breaching battery on the Roman fortress. Luther had made ready a mine which, in exploding, would shake the edifice of Rome to its foundations. This was the publication of his famous work on the *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, which appeared on the 26th of October, 1520.² Never did man placed in so critical a situation, display so much courage.

In that production he first describes, with inimitable irony, all the advantages for which he was indebted to his enemies.

"Whether I will or not," says he, "I am forced to become a more and more accomplished person every day, with so many and such learned masters striving which shall best urge me and exercise me. I wrote on the indulgences two years ago, but in

as equal in the eye of God, and therefore courting and flattering none. Things are tending to this result, we rejoice to think, both at Geneva and in Holland.
TR.

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 490.

² L. Opp. lat. ii. 63, and Leipsick, xvii. p. 511.

such a manner that I now repent me wonderfully of my published book. For at that time I clung with a certain inveterate superstition to the Roman tyranny; I did not then consider that indulgences were altogether to be rejected, approved, as I saw they were, by so general a consent among men. Nor was this wonderful, seeing that I rolled that rock alone." He thanks Prierius, Eck, Emser, and his other adversaries. "I denied," he continues, "that the popedom was of divine but admitted that it was of human right. But having heard and read the most subtile subtilities of these popes in upholding their idol, I now know, and am assured, that the popedom is the kingdom of Babylon and the might of Nimrod, the sturdy hunter. I pray therefore all my friends, and all the booksellers, to burn all that I have written on the subject, and to replace them with this single proposition: *The Papacy is a general chase,¹ commanded by the Roman Bishop, to overtake and destroy souls.*"

Luther next attacks the errors then prevailing with regard to the sacraments, monastic vows, &c. He reduces the seven sacraments of the Church to three—baptism, penance, and the holy supper. He expounds the true nature of the Lord's supper. He next passes to baptism, and it is here in particular that he establishes the excellence of faith, and powerfully attacks Rome. "God," says he, "has preserved to us this sacrament alone unalloyed with human traditions. God has said: *Whosoever shall have believed and been baptized, shall be saved.* This promise on the part of God, ought to be preferred to all the pomp of good works, all vows, all satisfactions, all the indulgences, to all things, in short, of man's invention. Now, on this promise, if we receive it with faith, hangs our whole salvation. If we believe, our heart is fortified by the divine promise; and although all should forsake the believer, this promise which he believes will not forsake him. With it he will resist the adversary who rushes upon his soul, and will have wherewithal to answer to pitiless death, and even to the judgment of God. It will be his consolation in every trial to say: God is faithful to his promises; I have received the pledge of them in my baptism; if God be for me, who shall be against me? Oh but the Christian, the baptized

¹ *Papatus est robusta venatio Romani Episcopi.* (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 64.)

man, is rich! Nothing can destroy him, provided he refuse not to believe. Possibly what I have said on the necessity of faith, will be met by referring to the baptism of infants. But as the Word of God is mighty to the changing even of the heart of an impious person, certainly not less inaccessible or less incapable than an infant, so also the prayer of the Church, to which all things are possible, changes the child by the faith which God is pleased to infuse into its soul, and thus cleanses and renews it."¹

"After explaining the doctrine of baptism, Luther employs it as a weapon in attacking the popedom. In fact, if a Christian find his whole salvation in the renewal of his baptism by faith, what need has he of the prescriptions of Rome?

"Therefore it is," says Luther, "that I declare that neither pope, nor bishop, nor any man, be he who he may, has power to impose the smallest matter on a Christian unless it should be with his own consent. Everything done otherwise is done tyrannically.² We are free with regard to all men. The vow made at our baptism is sufficient of itself, and comprehends more than we can ever accomplish.³ Hence all other vows may be abolished. Whosoever enters the priesthood or any religious order, let him well understand that the works of a monk or of a priest, however difficult they may be, differ in no respect, in the sight of God, from those of a countryman who tills the ground, or of a woman who conducts a household.⁴ God values all things by the standard of faith. And it often happens that the simple labour of a male or female servant is more agreeable to God than the fasts and the works of a monk, because in these faith is wanting. . . . The Christian people is God's true people, carried away captive into Babylon, where they have been robbed of that which they received at their baptism."

¹ Sicut enim verbum Dei potens est dum sonat, etiam impii cor immutare, quod non minus est surdum et incapax quam ullus parvulus, ita per orationem Ecclesiæ offerentis et credentis, parvulus fide infusâ mutatur, mundatur et renovatur. (L. Opp. lat. ii. 77.)

² Dico itaque neque papa, neque episcopus, neque ullus hominum habet jus unius syllabæ constituendæ super Christianum hominem, nisi id fiat ejusdem consensu, quidquid aliter fit tyrannico spiritu fit. (Ibid.)

³ Generali edicto tollere vota . . . abunde enim vovimus in baptismo et plus quam possimus implere. (Ibid. p. 78.)

⁴ Opera quantum libet sacra et ardua religiosorum et sacerdotum, in oculis Dei prorsus nihil distare ab operibus rustici in agro laborantis, aut mulieris in domo suâ curantis. (Ibid.)

Such were the weapons with which the religious revolution whose history we are tracing was effected. First, the necessity of faith was re-established, and then the Reformers employed it, like a huge mace, for shattering superstition to atoms. It was with this power of God that can remove mountains, that they attacked so many errors. These words of Luther's, and so many others like them, disseminated in towns, monasteries, and throughout the country villages, were the leaven which soon made the whole lump to rise.

Luther closes this famous production of his on the Babylonish captivity with these words:

"I learn that new papal excommunications are about to be fabricated against me. If this be the case, this present book may be regarded as part of my future retraction. The rest will speedily follow as a proof of my obedience, and together, with the help of Christ, they will form such a whole as Rome will never have seen or heard the like of."

VII. After such a publication, all hope of reconciliation between the pope and Luther might well be considered as at an end; that the faith of the Reformer was incompatible with the doctrines of the Church, must have struck the dullest observer; yet this was precisely the time when new negotiations were set on foot. Five weeks previous to the publication of the *Babylonish Captivity*, about the close of August 1520, the chapter general of the Augustinians was held at Eisleben. There the venerable Staupitz resigned the vicar-generalship of the order, and was succeeded by Wincelas Link, who accompanied Luther to Augsburg. The indefatigable Miltitz suddenly arrived in the midst of the chapter.¹ He felt a burning desire to reconcile the pope and Luther, and in this his vanity, his avarice,—still more, his jealousy and hatred, were all interested. He was annoyed by Eck and his bragging; he was aware that the Ingolstadt doctor decried him at Rome, and he would have sacrificed everything to frustrate the proceedings of this teasing rival, by the speedy conclusion of a peace. For the religious part of the matter he cared nothing. One day, as he himself relates, he was seated at table with the bishop of Meissen. The

¹ Nondum tot pressus difficultatibus animum desponderat Miltitius. . . . dignus profecto non mediocri laude. (Pallavicini, i. p. 68.)

guests had already indulged in copious libations, when a new production of Luther's was brought in, opened, and read. On hearing it the bishop was in a rage, the official swore, but Miltitz burst into a hearty laugh.¹ Miltitz treated the Reformation with the feelings of a man of the world; Eck as a theologian.

Roused by the arrival of Dr. Eck, Miltitz made a speech to the chapter of the Augustinians, with a strong Italian accent,² thinking thereby to impose on his honest fellow-countrymen. "The whole order of the Augustinians," said he, "is compromised in this affair. You must point out to me some means for putting down Luther."—"We have nothing to do with the doctor," said the fathers, "and we know not how best to advise you." They trusted, no doubt, to Staupitz having loosed Luther from the vows of the order at Augsburg. Miltitz insisted. "Let a deputation from this venerable chapter proceed to Luther, and urge him to write to the pope, assuring him that he has never attempted anything to the prejudice of his person."³ That will suffice to put an end to the matter." The chapter yielded to this request of the nuncio and, probably at his suggestion, commissioned their vicar-general, Staupitz, and his successor, Link, to confer with Luther. This deputation immediately set off for Wittenberg with a letter from Miltitz to the doctor, full of expressions of the utmost respect. "There is no time to be lost," said he, "the thunderbolt, already suspended over the Reformer's head, would soon burst upon it, and then all would be over."

Neither Luther nor the deputies who shared in his sentiments, hoped anything from a letter to the pope; but even that was a reason for not refusing to write one. Such a letter could be but a mere matter of form, and would thus give greater prominence to Luther's right. "This Italian of Saxony," (Miltitz) thought Luther, "no doubt has his own private interest in view in making this request. Be it so. I will write, as is really the fact, that I have never had anything to say against the pope personally.⁴ I must be on my guard not to attack the see of

¹ Der Bischof entrüstet, der Official gefuchet, et aber gelachet habe. (Seckend. p. 266.)

² Orationem habuit Italica pronunciatione vestitam. (L. Epp. i. p. 483.)

³ Petens consilium super me compescendo. (Ibid. p. 483.)

⁴ Nihil me in personam suam fuisse molitum. (Ibid. p. 484.)

Rome too strongly.¹ I must season it, however, with its own proper salt."²

Soon after this, however, the doctor was apprized of the bull having arrived in Germany; on the 13th of October he declared to Spalatin that he would not write to the pope, and on the 6th of that month he published his book on the *Babylonish Captivity*. Still Miltitz was not to be discouraged. His eagerness to humble Eck, made him believe impossibilities. On the 2d of October he wrote a letter full of high hope to the elector: "All will go well;" said he, "but, for God's sake, delay no longer to pay me the pension that you and your brother settled on me some years ago. I must have money for the purpose of making myself friends anew at Rome. Write to the pope, do homage to the young cardinals, his holiness's relations, with gold and silver pieces from your electoral highness's mint, and to these add some for me; for I have been robbed of all that you gave me."³

Not even after Luther had been informed of the bull, would the intriguing Miltitz allow himself to be discouraged. He sought to have a conference with Luther at Lichtemberg, and the elector enjoined the latter to repair thither and meet him.⁴ But his friends, and the affectionate Melanchthon in particular, were opposed to this.⁵ "What!" thought they, "can anything be so mad, as at the moment of the appearance of a bull, ordaining that Luther should be seized with the view of being conveyed to Rome, to accept of a conference with the pope's nuncio, in a remote place? Is it not clear that as Dr. Eck could not get near enough to the Reformer, in consequence of his having so openly proclaimed his hatred, the sly chamberlain has been commissioned to take Luther in his nest?"

The Wittemberg doctor was not to be deterred by these apprehensions; his prince had commanded, and he would obey. "I leave this for Lichtemberg," he writes to the chaplain on the 11th October; "pray for me." His friends would not abandon him; hence that same day, towards evening, Luther entered Lichtem-

¹ Quibus omnibus causa mea non displicet. (L. Epp. i. p. 486.)

² Aspergetur tamen sale suo. (L. Epp. i. p. 486.)

³ Den Pabsts Nepoten, 2 oder 3 Churfürstliche Goldund Silberstücke zu verehren. . . . (Seckend. p. 267.)

⁴ Sicut princeps ordinavit. (L. Epp. i. p. 455.)

⁵ Invito præceptore (Melanchthon) nescio quanta metuente. (Ibid.)

berg on horseback, surrounded by thirty horsemen, among whom was Melancthon. The papal nuncio arrived there about the same time, with a retinue of four persons.¹ May not this modest escort have been a trick employed to throw Luther and his friends off their guard? . . .

Miltitz urged Luther with the most pressing solicitations, assuring him that the blame would be laid on Eck and his absurd boasts,² and that all would end satisfactorily for both parties. "Very well," replied Luther, "I offer from this time forth to observe silence, provided my opponents do the same. I am willing to do all that I possibly can do, for the sake of peace."³

Miltitz was delighted. He accompanied Luther back to Wittenberg, and the Reformer and the pope's nuncio entered that city side by side, while Dr. Eck was already on his way thither, presenting with a threatening hand the dread bull, which was to crush the Reformation to the ground. "We shall bring the matter to a happy issue," Miltitz wrote straightway to the elector, "thank the pope for the rose, and at the same time send forty or fifty florins to the cardinal *Quatuor Sanctorum*."⁴

Luther had now to perform his promise by writing to the pope. Before he bade Rome an eternal farewell, he desired that she should once more hear from him important and salutary truths. Possibly some will see nothing more in his letter than a piece of caustic writing; a bitter and insulting satire; but this shows they know not the sentiments that really animated him. He ascribed to Rome, with perfect sincerity, all the woes that then afflicted Christendom; hence all that he says must be regarded, not as insults, but as solemn warnings. The more he loved Leo, so much the more did he love the Church of Christ, he desires, therefore, to expose to view the sore in all its extent. He must make the energy of his expressions the measure of the energy of his affection. It was now the time for striking vigorous blows. We might suppose we saw the prophet going his last

¹ Einer von mehr als 30, diser aber kaum mit 4 Pferden begleitet. (Seckend. p. 268.)

² Totum pondus in Eccium versurus. (L. Epp. i. p. 496.)

³ Ut nihil videar omittere quod in me ad pacem quoquo modo facere possit. (Ibid.)

⁴ Seckend. p. 268.

round, reproaching the city for all its abominations, and crying: "Yet some days!" . . . The letter runs as follows:

"To the most holy Father in God, Leo X., pope at Rome, be all salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

"From amid the fierce warfare in which I have now for three years been engaged with unruly men, I cannot but at times look to you, O Leo, most holy father in God! And albeit the folly of your ungodly flatterers have constrained me to appeal from your judgment to a future council, my heart has not turned itself away from your holiness, and I have not ceased to pray to God in constant prayers and profound sighs,¹ for your own welfare and that of your pontificate.

"I have impugned, indeed, some antichristian doctrines, and have inflicted a deep wound on my adversaries, on account of their ungodliness. I repent not of this, for here I have the example of Jesus Christ. What use is there in salt, if it bite not? What use in the edge of a sword, if it cut not?² Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently! O most excellent Leo, far from having ever conceived an evil thought with regard to you, I wish the most precious of blessings may be yours for eternity. I have done but one thing. I have maintained the Word of truth. I am ready to yield to all in everything; but as for that Word, I neither will nor can abandon it.³ He who thinks not as I do, thinks amiss.

"True it is that I have attacked the court of Rome, but neither you, nor any man on earth, can deny that the corruption there is greater than that of Sodom and Gomorrhah, and that the impiety that reigns there is past hope of cure. Yes, I have been horrified to perceive that under your name Christ's poor people have been deceived. This I have resisted and will resist it still; not that I imagine that I shall be able, in spite of the opposition of flatterers, to effect any good end in that Babylon, which is confusion itself, but I owe it to my brethren, in order that some if possible may escape these terrible plagues.

"You know it, that for many years Rome has been inundat-

¹ Ut non totis viribus, sedulis atque quantum in me fuit gemebundis precibus apud Deum quæsierim. (L. Epp. i. p. 498.)

² Quid proderit sal, si non mordeat? Quid os gladii si non cædat? (Ibid. p. 499.)

³ Verbum deserere et negare nec possum, nec volo. (Ibid. p. 499.)

ing the world with all that could destroy both soul and body. The Church of Rome, at one time foremost in holiness, has become a den of thieves, a scene of prostitution, a kingdom of death and hell,¹ so much so, that were antichrist himself to appear, he could not make his malignity worse. All this is clearer than the very light of the sun.

“And yet you, O Leo, are like a lamb in the midst of wolves, and like Daniel in the den of lions! Alone, what can you oppose to these monsters? There may possibly be three or four cardinals who are at once virtuous and learned. But what is that among so many? You would be destroyed before being allowed to attempt any remedy. It is all over with the court of Rome; the wrath of God has reached it and will consume it.² It hates counsel; it dreads reformation; it has no wish to moderate the fury of its ungodliness, and thus deserves to have said of it, what was said of its mother: *We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her.*³ It was for you and your cardinals to apply the remedy, but the sick man mocks at his physician and the horse spurns the reins. . . .

“With the full affection I bear to you, most excellent Leo, I have ever regretted that, formed as you are for a better age, you have been raised to the pontificate at such a time as this. Rome is not worthy of you, or of those who are like you; she deserves to have no better chief than Satan himself. It is the fact also, that he reigns more than you do, in that Babylon. Would to God that laying aside the glory so much cried up by your enemies, you might exchange it for a modest parish cure, or live on your paternal inheritance; for none but Iscariots are fit for such a glory. . . . O my dear Leo! of what use are you then, in that Roman court, if it be not that the most execrable persons make use of your name and your power for ruining men's fortunes, destroying their souls, multiplying crimes, oppressing the faith, the truth, and the whole Church of God? O Leo! Leo! you are the most wretched of men, and you sit on the most dangerous of thrones! I tell you the truth, for I wish you well.

¹ Facta est . . . spelunca latronum licentiosissima, lupanar omnium impudentissimum, regnum peccati, mortis et inferni. (L. Epp. i. p. 500.)

² Actum est de Romana curia : pervenit in eam ira Dei usque in finem. . . (Ibid.)

³ Jeremiah, li. 9.

"Is it not true, that beneath the vast expanse of heaven, there is nothing more corrupt, more detestable, than the Roman court? It infinitely exceeds the Turks in vices and corruption. Once the gate of heaven, it has now become the mouth of hell; an ample mouth, which God keeps open in his wrath,¹ in such a manner that beholding the wretched beings who cast themselves into it, I must shout, as if in a storm, in order that some at least may be saved from the frightful gulph.

"Therefore is it, O Leo, my Father, that I have broken out against that death-dealing see. Far from rising against you personally, I have thought it my duty to labour for your salvation, by valiantly assaulting that prison, or rather that hell, in which you are shut up. A man only does his duty when he does all sorts of mischief to the court of Rome. To load her with shame is to honour Christ; in a word, to be a Christian is not to be a Roman.

"Meanwhile, seeing that in my endeavours to succour the see of Rome, I had been losing both my cares and labours, I sent it a letter of divorce; I said to it: Farewell, Rome! *Let him that is unjust be unjust still: let him that is filthy be filthy still!*² and I gave myself to calm solitary meditations on the Holy Scripture. Then did Satan open his eyes, and rouse his servant John Eck, that great enemy of Jesus Christ, for the purpose of making me go down again into the lists. He wished to establish, not the primacy of Peter, but his own, and in order thereto, to lead the vanquished Luther off in triumph. It is he whom you have to blame for all the opprobrium with which the see of Rome has been covered." Luther then relates what had passed between him and de Vio, Miltitz, and Eck; he proceeds as follows:

"Now then I come to you, most holy Father, and, prostrate at your feet, beseech you to bridle, if possible, those foes to peace. But my doctrine I cannot retract. I cannot allow people to impose rules of interpretation upon Holy Scripture. The Word of God must be left free, it being the very spring whence all liberty gushes forth.^{3 4}

¹ Olim janua cœli, nunc patens quoddam os inferni et tale os, quod urgente ira Dei, obstrui non potest. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 501.)

² Revelations, xxii. 11.

³ Leges interpretandi verbi Dei non patior, cum oporteat verbum Dei esso non alligatum, quod libertatem docet. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 504.)

⁴ Notable words of Luther, which may well suggest reflections alike to the

"O Leo! my Father! listen not to those flattering syrens who tell you that you are not a mere man but a demi-god, and that you may command whatsoever you please. You are the servant of servants, and the seat you occupy is the most dangerous and wretched of all. Believe not those who exalt, but those who humble you. I am too bold perhaps in giving lessons to so high a Majesty, which ought to instruct all men. But I see the dangers that encompass you at Rome: I see you tossed hither and thither as it were on the waves of the high sea when lashed into a storm. Charity urges me, and I am bound to utter a cry of warning and of salvation.

"Not to appear with empty hands before your holiness, I present to you a little book which has appeared under your name, and which will inform you what subjects may engage my atten-

scientific expositors of our day, and to the opponents of the unrestricted use of the Bible under the popedom. Both, indeed, speak of the free examination of the Bible, the former to defend it, the latter to declare it dangerous: but both attach a wrong meaning to it, not what the Reformer, not what Luther understood by it. Luther's wish was "that God's word should be left free," and this freedom was to consist in its "not being subjected to any rules of interpretation." This the papist did in his time, and this they now do: this same thing do, also, those Protestants who would elucidate the Bible by their so-called principles of exposition. They as well as the papists, lay down certain rules of interpretation, and the whole controversy between these two parties with respect to the so-called free examination (of the Bible) is merely this: whether people must follow the Church's rules of interpretation, or if every man may invent rules of his own: and in that case, certainly it were better that we had certain general and firmly established rules approved throughout the Church, than that every man should in this respect be left to his own peculiar views. But the genuine Protestant knows no rule of man's invention by which he must expound the Bible. His first object is not to explain; it is to read; and thus is the meaning made plain to him. All the freedom he requires is that of submitting himself to the impression which the words of the Bible, taken in their connection, naturally make as he first reads them, on his own or any man's mind. Would but the advocates of the popedom remark this, they would then see how improperly and unfairly they act, when, dissembling the difference between Protestants and Protestants, they confound the free examination of the Bible in the genuine spirit of the Reformers, with the free examination of the expositors of our days, and attack the former with weapons applicable only to the latter, and employed too, with no less earnestness by the genuine Reformed against that examination, which is called indeed free, but which is really subjected to arbitrary laws. This is one of those artful pieces of dissimulation, by which the present defenders of the popedom (I might almost say—against their better judgment) try to darken the truth to their fellow religionists.—L. R. This Note happily applies less to the British Churches than to those of the continent, where, under pretence of introducing scientific rules of interpretation, learned men have taken the most unwarranted liberties with the Word of God, and made fearful havoc of the faith of many. But evil men and seducers are now going forth amongst us also. There is a danger of our losing respect for those admirable commentators who have sought only to bring out the plain meaning of Scripture. Hence we too need to be reminded that we cannot too freely subject ourselves to the plain meaning of the Scriptures, as they lie before us, or are read in our hearing. Tr.

tion, if your flatterers permit me. It is a small affair if we look to the size, but a great one if we look to the contents, for the sum of the Christian life will be found comprised in it. I am poor and have nothing else to offer you; besides, can you need anything but spiritual gifts? I recommend myself to your holiness. May the Lord Jesus Christ keep you evermore! Amen!"

The small book presented by Luther as a token of respect to the pope, was his discourse on *the Christian's liberty*. In it, without indulging in polemics, the Reformer shows how, without any infraction of the liberty which his faith has given him, the Christian may submit to all external ordinances, in a spirit of freedom and of charity. Two truths form the foundation of all that follows: The Christian is free and master of all things. The Christian is a servant and subject to everybody in everything. He is free and master, in virtue of his faith; he is a subject and servant in virtue of his charity.

He first shows the power of faith in rendering the Christian free: "Faith unites the soul with Christ, as a wife is united with her husband," says Luther to the pope. "All that Christ possesses becomes the property of the believing soul. Christ possesses all things and eternal life; thenceforth they belong to the soul. The soul possesses all sins and vices; these thenceforth become the property of Christ. Then there commences a blessed exchange: Christ who is at once God and man, Christ who has never sinned, Christ whose holiness is invincible, Christ the Almighty and Eternal, appropriating to himself by his marriage ring, that is to say, by faith, all the sins of the believing soul, these sins are swallowed up in him, and abolished in him; for no sin can subsist before his infinite righteousness. Thus, by means of faith the soul is delivered from all sins, and clothed with the everlasting righteousness of her husband, Jesus Christ. O happy union! the rich, the noble, the Holy Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, takes in marriage, this poor, despised, wicked bride,¹ rescues her from all evil, and adorns her with the most exquisite possessions. . . . Christ, king and priest, shares this honour, and this glory, with all Christians. The Christian is a

¹ Is nun das nicht eine fröhliche Wirthschaft, da der reiche, edle, fromme, Bräutigam Christus, das arme, verachtete, böse Huhrllein zur Ehe nimmt, (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 385.)

king, and hence all things are his; he is a priest, hence God is his. And it is faith, not works, that brings him such an honour. The Christian is free from all things, above all things, faith giving him all things abundantly.”¹

In the second part of this discourse, Luther presents the other side of the truth. Albeit the Christian has thus become free, he voluntarily becomes a servant, so as to act towards his brethren as God has acted towards himself by Jesus Christ. “I desire,” says he, “freely, joyously, gratuitously to serve a father who has lavished on me the whole plenitude of his good things: I desire to become all things for my neighbour, as Christ has become all things for me.”—“From faith,” continues Luther, “flows love to God; from love flows a life full of liberty, charity, and joy. Oh but the Christian life is a noble and an elevated life! But alas! no one knows it, and no one preaches it. By faith the Christian exalts himself to God; by love he descends to man, yet always abiding in God. Such is true liberty, a liberty that surpasses all other liberty, as much as the heavens are high above the earth.”

Such was the publication with which Luther accompanied his letter to Leo X.

VIII. While the Reformer was thus addressing himself for the last time to the Roman pontiff, the bull anathematizing him was already in the hands of the chiefs of the German Church, and at the doors of Luther's residence. The pope had commissioned two high functionaries of his court, Caraccioli and Alexander, to convey it to the archbishop of Mainz, with notice for him to see to its being executed. But in Saxony, Eck himself appeared as the herald and executor of this great doing of the pontiff's. The Ingolstadt doctor had understood better than any one else the potency of Luther's blows; he had foreseen the danger, and had stretched out his hand to support the shaken edifice of Rome. He considered himself as the Atlas destined

¹ Here we see the pure Gospel, the glad tidings, precisely adapted to what our hearts require, the saving interchange between Christ and us who believe, whereby all that is His becomes ours and all that is ours His: our poverty He takes upon Him, and his riches supply our want. Though hell should rise against this; though the unbelieving and the superstitious may revile what they do not understand, the Christian reads the same plainly, without far-fetched expositions, in the Bible, and experiences the saving fruits of it in his heart.—L. R.

to bear up, on his robust shoulders, the ancient Roman world just as it threatened to fall to pieces. Proud of the success he had had at Rome, proud of the commission he had received from the sovereign pontiff, proud of the bull that was in his hand, sealing the condemnation of his indomitable rival, his present mission was for him a more magnificent triumph than all the victories he had won in Hungary, Bavaria, Lombardy, and Saxony, and which had previously furnished him with so much matter for glorying. But this pride of his was doomed to experience a sudden fall. By entrusting Eck with the publication of the bull, the pope had committed a blunder which was sure to destroy its effect; for all minds of any susceptibility were shocked to see so much distinction conferred on a man who held no very high place in the ranks of the Church. Bishops accustomed to receive bulls from the pope directly, took it ill that this one should be published in their dioceses by this suddenly appointed nuncio. The same nation that had hissed the pretended victory of Leipsick, at the time of his taking flight into Italy, looked on in amazement and indignation as he repassed the Alps, armed with the insignia of papal nuncio, and with the power of crushing her choicest men to the ground. As for Luther, he looked upon the sentence brought by his implacable adversary as an act of personal revenge; that condemnation was in his eyes, says Pallavicini, the treacherous poignard of a deadly foe—not the legitimate axe of a Roman lictor.¹ It was no longer considered as the bull of the sovereign pontiff but as the bull of Dr. Eck; and thus the blow was paralysed and weakened beforehand, by the very man who had provoked it.

The chancellor of Ingolstadt hastened into Saxony—the scene of his late encounter, and that in which he wished to attract notice to his victory. He succeeded in posting up the bull at Meissen, at Merseburg, and at Brandenburg, towards the close of September. But in the first of those cities it was placarded at a place where nobody could read it, and the bishops of the three sees were in no haste to publish it. Even his great protector, duke George, prohibited the council at Leipsick to give it publicity, until they had received an order to that effect from

¹ Non tanquam a securi legitimi lictoris, sed e telo infensissimi hostis. . . . (Pallavicini, i. p. 74.)

the bishop of Merseburg, and that order did not arrive till the year after. "These difficulties are only in matters of form," thought at first John Eck; for everything else seemed to smile upon him. Duke George sent him a gilt cup and some ducats. Miltitz even, posting off to Leipsick, as soon as he heard of his rival being there, invited him to dinner. The two legates were table friends, and Miltitz thought he could in no way feel Dr. Eck's pulse better than with the glass in his hand. "After he had drunk pretty well," says the pope's chamberlain, "he began to brag not a little, he made a display of his bull, and said that he was about to bring this queer fellow Martin to his senses."¹ But the Ingolstadt doctor soon had cause to remark a change in the wind. A single year had sufficed to effect a mighty change in Leipsick.² On St. Michael's day, some students posted placards in ten different places, and in these keenly attacked the new nuncio. This so frightened him, that he fled for shelter to the monastery of St. Paul, where Tetzels had taken refuge; there he declined all visits, and prevailed on the rector to call his young adversaries to account. But poor Eck made little by this. The students composed a song at his expense, and sang it through the streets, so that Eck heard it in his prison. All his courage now forsook him; the once formidable champion shook at every joint. Every day brought him fresh threatening letters. One hundred and fifty students arrived from Wittenberg, uttering bold speeches against the papal envoy. This poor apostolic nuncio was now quite unnerved. "I would not that he were slain," said Luther, "but I should like to see his plans prove abortive."³ Eck left his retreat by night, made his escape in a clandestine manner from Leipsick, and went to hide himself at Cobourg. Miltitz, in relating this, exults at it more than did the Reformer, but his exultation did not last long. All the chamberlain's projects of reconciliation came to nothing, and he came to a melancholy end, having lost his life by falling into the Rhine at Mains, when drunk.

Gradually recovering courage, Eck repaired to Erfurt, whose

¹ Nachdem (writes Miltitz) er nun tapfer getrunken hatte, fieng er gleich an trefflich von seiner Ordre zu prahlen, etc. (Seckend. p. 238.)

² Longe aliam faciem et mentem Lipsiæ eum invenire quam sperasset. . . (L. Epp. i. p. 492.)

³ Nolle eum occidi, quamquam optem ejus consilia irrita fieri. (Ibid.)

divines had given the Wittenberg doctor more than one proof of their jealousy. He insisted that his bull should be published in that town, but the students laid violent hands on the copies that were sent, tore them to pieces, and threw them into the river, saying: "It is a bull, let it swim!" "Now," said Luther when he learned this, "the pope's paper is really a bull."²

Eck durst not show himself at Wittenberg; he sent the bull to the rector, threatening him if it were not obeyed, with the destruction of the university. He wrote at the same time to duke John, brother, and co-regent of Frederick: "Take not in ill part what I am doing," said he, "for I am acting for the faith, and that costs me much anxiety, toil, and money."³ ⁴ The rector declared that as the bull was not accompanied with any letter to him from the pope, he refused to publish it, and had referred the matter to the council of lawyers.⁵ Such was the reception given to the condemnation of Luther by men of letters.

Whilst the bull was thus powerfully agitating men's minds in Germany, a grave voice was commanding attention in another country of Europe. A man who foresaw the immense rendings which the pope's bull was about to produce in the Church, came forward to deliver a serious warning and to defend the Reformer. This was the same Swiss priest we have already mentioned, Ulrich Zwingli, who though not connected with Luther by any tie of friendship, now published a production replete with wisdom and dignity, and which forms the first of his numerous works.⁶

¹ A studiosis discerpta et in aquam projecta, dicentibus: Bulla est, in aquam natet. (L. Epp. i. p. 520.)

² *Bulla* in Latin, and *bulle* in French, mean *bell* or *bubble of water*. Ta.

³ Mit viel Mühe, Arbeit und Kosten. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 317.)

⁴ Eckius all the while pretended to be an involuntary agent in the business, alleging that only the cause of religion could have induced him to submit to so much labour and expense. One of his private letters, however, sent from Rome, happened to fall into Luther's hands; who instantly published its contents, and at the same time made pertinent remarks on the hypocritical and interested motives of the writer, which were completely laid open by this accident. (Milner, vol. iv. p. 479.)

⁵ "He (Eck) sent a copy of the bull to the university of Wittenberg, and entreated them to be obedient to the papal injunctions; but that learned body paid no other regard to his solicitations, than to inform the elector of the circumstance, and to intimate to that wise prince, that as Eckius had not ventured to bring the bull himself, they suspected that he had been guilty of some unfair practices in the business." (Milner, vol. iv. p. 479.)

⁶ *Consilium cujusdam ex animo cupientis esse consultum et pontificis dignitati et Christianæ religionis tranquillitati.* (Zwinglii Opera, curante Schulero et Schultheissio, iii. p. 1—5.)

An affection truly fraternal seems to have drawn him towards the Wittemberg doctor. "The pontiff's piety," says he, "requires that he should cheerfully sacrifice whatever he holds dearest, to the glory of Christ, his king, and to the public peace of the Church. Nothing is more prejudicial to his dignity than his defending it only by bribes or terrors. Before Luther's writings had been so much as read, he was denounced among the people as an heretic, a schismatic, and antichrist himself. Nobody warned him; nobody refuted him; he called for discussion, but it was thought enough to condemn him. The bull published against him displeased those even who honoured the papal state; for it is marked throughout with the impotent hatred of certain monks, not by the mildness of a pontiff who, as the vicar of Jesus Christ, ought to be full of charity. That the true doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ has grievously degenerated is what all acknowledge, so that a public and signal restoration of good laws and manners is universally called for.¹ Turn to men of learning and virtue, and you will find that in proportion to the purity of their character, is their attachment to the truths of the Gospel, and the less are they scandalized by Luther's books.² There is not one of them but confesses that these books have made them better,³ even although passages are to be found in them which cannot be approved. Let men of pure doctrine and acknowledged probity be chosen; let three princes above all suspicion, the emperor Charles, the king of England, and the king of Hungary, themselves appoint the arbiters; let these read Luther's writings, hear what he himself has to say, and let all they shall decide be ratified! *Νικησάτω ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ παιδεία καὶ ἀλήθεια!*"⁴

This suggestion from Switzerland had no result. The grand divorce behaved to be accomplished; Christendom was doomed to be rent asunder; in her very wounds she was to find the remedy for her woes.

¹ Multum degenerasse ab illa sincera Christi Evangelica doctrina, adeo ut nemo non fateatur opus esse publica aliqua et insigni legum et morum instauratione. (Zwinglii Opera, curante Schulero et Schulthessio, iii. p. 3.)

² "But as Father Paul observes, not a word was said by which men could infer which were heretical, which false, and which scandalous; and thus matters were left in greater doubt than before the publication of the bull." (Milner, vol. iv. p. 478.)

³ Nemo non fatetur se ex illius libris factum esse meliorem. (Zw. Opp. ut. sup. p. 4.)

⁴ May the discipline and the truth of Christ prevail!

IX. In point of fact, what could avail all this resistance on the part of mere students, rectors, and priests? The union of two such mighty hands as those of the emperor Charles V. and the pope, must be sure to crush to the ground these scholars and grammarians. Shall any man be found so foolhardy as to resist the combined powers of Christendom's pontiff, and of the emperor of the West. The blow has been struck; Luther has been cast out; the Gospel seems to be ruined. At this solemn moment the Reformer does not dissemble the amount of peril in which he stood. He looks upward. He prepares to receive as from the hand of the Lord himself, the stroke that threatens to annihilate him. His soul collects its thoughts at the footstool of God's throne. "I know not," says he, "what will be the result, nor do I care to know, assured as I am that He who sitteth in the heavens hath foreseen from all eternity the commencement, the continuation, and the end of this affair. Wherever the blow may reach me, I am without fear. Not a leaf falls from a tree without the will of our Father. How much less can we? . . . It is a small matter to die for the Word, for that Word which became incarnate for our sake, died itself first.¹ If we die with it, we shall rise again with it; and passing through what it passed through, we shall arrive where it has arrived, and shall dwell with it throughout eternity."² At times, however, Luther was unable to repress the scorn he could not but feel at the manœuvres of his enemies; and we then find him expressing himself in that mixture of sublimity and irony which marked his character. "I know nothing about Eck," says he, "but that he has arrived with a long beard, a long bull, and a long purse. . . . As for his bull, I shall laugh at it."³

He came to the knowledge of the papal letter on the 3d of

¹ *Parum est nos pro verbo mori, cum ipsum incarnatum pro nobis prius mortuum sit.* . . . (Epp. i. p. 490.)

² Let us here contemplate the steady confidence, the full persuasion of the goodness of his cause, with which Luther acted; how completely he was possessed by it, and how ready to suffer all things in maintaining it. . . . Who can bear the hypocrisy of those persons who, although aware of these effusions of Luther's inmost feelings—these proofs of his integrity—yet endeavour by raking up and exaggerating this or that failing, such as no man is exempt from, or even by deliberate calumnies, to prejudice men's minds against the Reformation, and to persevere in maintaining their wicked opposition to it.—L. R.

³ *Venisse cum barbatus, bullatum, nummatum.* . . . *Ridebo et ego bullam sive ampullam.* (Ibid. 488.)

October. "Behold at last," says he, "this Roman bull has arrived. I despise and attack it as impious, false, and worthy of Eck in all respects. It does not meet me with a single reason; I am summoned to appear, not that I may be heard, but that I may sing my palinode. I will treat it as if it were a forgery, though I believe it to be genuine. Oh, were Charles V. but a man, and would he but from love to Christ attack these demons!¹ I rejoice to have some evils to endure for the best of causes. Already I feel more free at heart; for now at length I know that the pope is antichrist, and that his seat is that of Satan himself."²

Saxony was not the only country thrown into alarm by the thunderbolts of Rome. They suddenly disturbed the peace of a quiet family in Suabia, a family that stood neuter. Bilibald Pirkheimer of Nuremberg, one of the most distinguished men of his day, having lost at an early age his beloved wife, Crescentia, was united in the bonds of the warmest affection with his two young sisters, Charitas, Abbess of St. Clare, and Clara, a nun of the same convent. These two young women served God in solitude, and divided their time between study, the care of the poor, and thoughts of eternity. Bilibald, himself a statesman, found relief amid his public cares in corresponding with them. They were learned women, read Latin and studied the Fathers, but there was nothing they liked so well as Holy Scripture. They had never had any master but their brother. The letters of Charitas are marked by delicacy and amiability. In the warmth of her affection for Bilibald, she dreaded on his account the slightest danger. For the purpose of re-assuring this timid soul, Pirkheimer composed a dialogue between Charitas and Veritas, (charity and truth) in which Veritas endeavours to

¹ *Utinam Carolus vir esset, et pro Christo has Satanas aggrederetur.* (Epp. i. p. 494.)

² Thus was Luther enlightened by degrees. It was thus no preconceived plan that he sought to carry out. Long did he desire, in opposition to all that he felt in his own bosom to the contrary, to preserve his respect for the pope and the papal dignity. It was not without many scruples that he at length came to cast it off—a plain proof of his unaffected integrity. Yet the papal court would not remain quiet, until it had given the clearest proofs that the pope was to be accounted no better than antichrist: truly its whole doctrines and doings were opposed to Christ.—L. R.

encourage Charitas.¹ Nothing could be more touching, or better calculated to cheer a tender and agonised heart.

What must have been the consternation of Charitas, when the report ran that the name of Bilibald was posted up under the pope's bull on the cathedral doors side by side with that of Luther! In fact, hurried along by blind fury, with Luther, Eck had associated six of the most distinguished men in Germany—Carlstadt, Feldkirchen, Egranus, who cared very little about it, Adelman, Pirkheimer, and his friend Spengler, who were particularly alive to such an insult in consequence of the public functions with which they were invested. Great was the agitation in the convent of Saint Clare. How could the disgrace of Bilibald be endured? Nothing affects relations so much as such trials. Pirkheimer and Spengler wrote a letter to the pope, in which they declared that they adhered to the doctrines of Luther only in so far as these were conformed to the Christian faith. Wrath and revenge had been evil counsellors to Eck, for the names of Bilibald and his friends proved hurtful to the bull, and the irritation on the subject became more general, on account of the high character of those men and their numerous relations.

Luther affected to doubt at first whether the bull were genuine. "I learn," says he, in the first of his publications on the subject, "that Eck has brought from Rome a new bull, so like himself that it might be called Dr. Eck, so full is it of falsehoods and blunders. He gives out that it is the work of the pope, while it is nothing but a piece of falsehood." After giving the reasons for his doubts, Luther concludes by saying, "I would fain see with my own eyes the lead, the seals, the strings, the contents, the signature of the bull, all of it in a word, or not give the matter of a hair for all this scolding."²

But nobody doubted, not even Luther, that the bull was from the pope. Germany waited to see what the Reformer was next to do. Was he to continue firm? All eyes were now turned to Wittemberg. Luther did not keep his opponents long in suspense, but replied by a thundering discharge in his publi-

¹ Pirkheimer, Opp. Frankfort.

² Oder nicht ein Haarbreit geben. . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 323.

cation of 4th November 1520, intituled, *Against the Bull of Antichrist*.¹

"What errors, what deceptions," says he, "have found their way among the poor people under the mantle of the Church, and of the pretended infallibility of the pope! how many souls have thus been lost! how much blood has been shed! how many murders committed! how many kingdoms destroyed! . . .

"I can very well distinguish," says he ironically, further on "between art and malice, and care little about a piece of malice without art. It is so easy to burn books, that mere children can do so; by how much stronger reason may the pope and his doctors?

¹ In the edition of Luther's Latin works, Jena, 1581, I find under date 1st December 1520, his tract entitled *Adversus execrabilem Antichristi Bullam*, and that in the preface he reiterates the suspicions he had before expressed in German, that Eck was the real author of the bull.

It is remarkable that in one of the most tremendous passages of this tract—that in which Luther solemnly delivers the pope, the cardinals, &c., over to Satan, in the terms of the apostolic judgment, he does this, not in virtue of his ordination as a priest, or his degree as a doctor, or as having received any special call like that of the ancient prophets, but simply on the ground of his baptism, making him *a child of God and co-heir with Christ*, and joining with himself simply *all who worship Christ*. The whole passage is very striking, and in the noble picture it exhibits of the simple soldier of Christ, offering himself and his fellow-soldiers to the slaughter in defence of the insulted doctrines of their Lord, indirectly, yet with a force altogether overwhelming, condemns those who seem to think that without being ordained to the ministry, no Christian should dare to stand forward in the battles of the faith. The fact of his being baptized into Christ, seemed to Luther to warrant, as well as to demand, a zeal and a devotedness which no subsequent fact, such as that of his ordination, could increase, and this is a feeling that every faithful pastor will rejoice to see in his flock, instead of cooling their zeal by arrogating to himself a sort of monopoly of responsibility and of service. The passage referred to may be translated thus:—

"Thee therefore Leo X., ye lords cardinals at Rome, and whosoever has any weight at Rome, I address and freely tell you to your face, if in your name, and with your knowledge this bull hath gone forth, and you own it to be yours, I, too, will use my power (*potestate mea*) by which in baptism by the mercy of God I was made a son of God and co-heir with Christ, founded on that firm rock which fears not the gates of hell, nor heaven, nor earth, and I say, admonish and exhort you, heartily to return, and that you restrain these diabolical blasphemies, and more than excessively audacious impieties, and that soon. The which unless ye do, know ye that I with all who worship Christ, hold your seat, possessed and oppressed by Satan, to be the damned seat of antichrist, which we will not only not obey, nor desire to be subject to or incorporated with, but detest and execrate, as the chief and greatest enemy of Christ, being ready in defence of this our opinion, not only gladly to bear your foolish censures, but even beg that you will never absolve us, or number us among your people, nay more, that you may fill up the measure of your bloody tyranny, we ultroneously offer ourselves to death. And if the Spirit of Christ, and the *impetus* of our faith avail ought, by these writings, should you persevere in that madness, we condemn you and deliver you, together with that bull, and all the decretals to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that your spirit may be delivered with us in the day of the Lord. In the name of him whom ye persecute, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen." TR

It were well that they could show more ability than is required for burning books. . . Besides, let my books be destroyed.¹ I wish for nothing more; for my only wish has been to lead souls to the Bible, after coming to which they may forsake my writings one and all.² Great God! had we but the knowledge of Scripture, what need would there be for my books? . . . By the grace of God I am free, and bulls neither comfort nor terrify me. My strength and consolation are placed where neither men nor devils can reach them."

The tenth proposition of Luther's, condemned by the pope, runs thus: "Sins are forgiven to no man, unless he believes that they are forgiven when the priest absolves him." In condemning this the pope denied that faith was necessary. "They pretend," exclaims Luther, "that we ought not to believe that sins are forgiven, even should we be absolved by the priest. And what then are we to do? . . . Harken now, O Christians, to a piece of news from Rome. Condemnation has been pronounced against that article of faith which we profess to believe when we say: 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Christian Church, and the forgiveness of sins.' If I were sure that the pope has really given this bull at Rome," (and of this he had no doubt) "and that it is not the invention of Eck, that arch-liar, I should like to call aloud upon all Christians to regard it as their duty to hold the pope to be the true antichrist spoken of in Scripture. And should he refuse to cease publicly proscribing the faith of the Church, then . . . let the temporal sword itself resist him rather than the Turk! . . . For the Turks permit us to believe, whereas the pope prohibits us."

While Luther was expressing himself with so much force, dangers were thickening around him. His enemies were now planning his expulsion from Wittenberg, calculating that could Luther and Wittenberg be separated, both Luther and Wittenberg would be ruined, and that thus by one stroke they might rid Rome alike of the heretical doctor and of the university. To this task duke George, the bishop of Mersburg, and the Leipsick

¹ So ist Bücher Verbrennen so leicht, dass es auch kinder können, schweig denn der heilige Vater Pöbst. . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 324.)

² . . . In Biblien zu führen, dass man derselben Verstand erlangte, und den meine Büchlein verschwinden liess. (Ibid.)

divines, secretly applied themselves;¹ on hearing of which underhand attempt, Luther said: "I commit the whole matter into the hands of God."² ³ These secret doings were not without their effects. Adrian, Hebrew professor at Wittenberg, all at once turned against the doctor. No small steadfastness in the faith was required in order to sustain the blow inflicted by the bull of Rome, and certain characters go along with the truth only to a certain point. Such was Adrian. Terrified by that condemnation, he quitted Wittenberg to go to meet with doctor Eck at Leipsick.

The bull now began to be put into execution. The voice that had gone forth from the high-priest of Christendom, was no empty sound. Fire and sword had long been inculcating submission to it. It was the signal for preparing the stakes at which the disobedient were to suffer. All things gave token that a terrible catastrophe was about to put an end to the audacious revolt of the Augustinian monk. The papal nuncios had been besieging the young emperor; Charles declared that he would protect the old religion,⁴ and in some of his hereditary possessions fires were seen lighted, at which the writings of the heretic were to be reduced to ashes. Such auto-da-fes were attended by princes of the Church and counsellors of state. Those flames, said Rome, will spread terror everywhere, and so it was with respect to many superstitious and timid minds. Yet, even in Charles's hereditary states, where alone persons were found bold enough to execute the bull, the people, and sometimes the great, would often respond to these pontifical demonstrations only by laughter and signs of indignation. "Luther," said the Louvain doctors, on presenting themselves to Margaret, governante of the Netherlands; "Luther is subverting the Christian faith." "Who is this Luther," asked the princess. "An ignorant monk." "Very well," replied she, "do you who are so learned and so

¹ Ut Wittenberga pellerer. (L. Epp. i. p. 519.)

² Id quod in manum, Dei refero. (Ibid. p. 520.)

³ We here see a heart wholly devoted to the cause of God and of truth, true to that cause to the death. Who is the slanderer that would dare to cast suspicion on this man's designs? This alone seems to me to suffice for making every impartial mind sensible that all accusations to the contrary are to be held as cowardly calumnies.—L. R.

⁴ A ministris pontificiis mature præ-occupatus, declaravit se velle veterem fidem tutari. . . . (Pallavicini, i. p. 80.)

many, write against him. The world will put more faith in many learned men than in one isolated man without learning." The doctors of Louvain preferred adopting an easier method. They were at the expense of having an immense bonfire made; a vast multitude thronged the place of execution; students and burgesses were seen traversing the crowd in great haste, and carrying bulky volumes under their arms, which they threw into the flames. The monks and doctors were edified by their zeal; but the trick was discovered afterwards; it was the *Sermones Discipuli, Tartaret*, and other scholastic and papistical books that were thrown into the fire instead of Luther's writings.¹ . . .

The count of Nassau, viceroy of Holland, told the Dominicans who solicited him to allow them to burn the doctor's books: "Go, and preach the Gospel as purely as Luther does, and you will have nobody to complain of." The Reformer having become the subject of conversation at a festive entertainment, where the chief princes of the empire were met, the lord of Ravenstein said aloud: "In the course of four centuries, a single Christian man has dared to raise his head, and the pope would have him be put to death."²

Luther, in the full consciousness of the goodness of his cause, remained unmoved amid the tumult excited by the bull.³ "Did you not urge me so warmly," said he to Spalatin, "I would hold my peace, well aware as I am, that this is a work that must be accomplished by the counsel and the power of God."⁴ Here it was the timid that was for speaking out, and the strong that wished to remain quiet. This arose from Luther's perceiving the presence of a power which had escaped the eye of his friend. "Don't lose hope," continues the Reformer. "It is Christ who has begun these things and it is he who will accomplish them, whether I be obliged to take to flight, or be put to death. Jesus Christ is present here, and he that is in us is mightier than he that is in the world."⁵

¹ Seckend. p. 289.

² Es ist in 400 Jahren ein christlicher mann aufgestanden, den will der Pöbst todt haben. (Seckend. p. 288.)

³ In bullosis istis tumultibus. (L. Epp. i. p. 519.)

⁴ Rem totam Deo committerem. (Ibid. p. 521.)

⁵ Christus ista coepit, ipse perficiet, etiam me sive extincto, sive fugato. (Ibid p. 526.)

X. But duty constrained him to speak, in order that the truth might be manifested to the world. Rome had smitten him; he behoved to let it be known how he had received her blows. The pope had put him to the ban of the Church; he would now himself put the pope to the ban of Christendom. Up to that hour the word of the pontiff had been omnipotent; he would now match word against word, and the world should know which was the more potent of the two. "I desire," says he, "to set my conscience at rest by making men aware of the danger to which they are exposed;"¹ and at the same time, he prepared to renew his appeal to a universal council. To appeal from the pope to a council was a crime, and thus it was by a new invasion of the pontifical prerogative, that Luther sought to justify those he had already committed.

On the 17th of November, a notary and five witnesses, among whom was Cruciger, met at ten o'clock in the morning in one of the halls of the Augustinian monastery, where the doctor resided. There the public officer, Saretor of Eisleben, immediately set himself to the task of minuting the Reformer's protest, which he pronounced in presence of the witnesses, with great solemnity, as follows—

"Whereas a council-general of the Christian Church is above the pope, especially in what concerns the faith;

"Whereas the pope's authority is not above, but beneath Scripture, and he has no right to slay Christ's sheep, and to throw them into the jaws of the wolf;

"I, Martin Luther, Augustinian, doctor of the sacred Scriptures at Wittenberg, appeal by this written document, for myself, and for those who are or who shall be with me, from the most holy pope Leo, to a future universal Christian council.

"I appeal from the said pope Leo, first, as from an iniquitous, rash, and tyrannical judge, who condemns me unheard, and without assigning reasons; secondly, as from an heretic and apostate, wandering from the right way, hardened and condemned by the Holy Scriptures, who enjoins me to deny that Christian faith is necessary to the due use of the sacraments;² thirdly, as from an

¹ Ut meam conscientiam redimam. (L. Epp. i. p. 522.)

² Ab erroneo, indurato, per Scripturas sanctas damnato, hæretico et apostata. (L. Opp. lat. p. 50). See also L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 332.) The German contains some paragraphs that are not to be found in the Latin.

enemy, an antichrist, an adversary, a tyrant of Holy Scripture,¹ who dares to oppose his own words to all the words of God; fourthly, as from a contemner, a slanderer, a blasphemer of the Holy Christian Church and of a free council, who maintains that a council, in itself, is nothing.

“Therefore do I most humbly beseech the most serene, most illustrious, excellent, generous, noble, powerful, wise, and prudent lords, Charles, Roman Emperor, the electors, princes, counts, barons, knights, gentlemen, counsellors, cities, and boroughs of the whole German nation, to adhere to my protestation, and to join me in resisting the antichristian conduct of the pope, for the glory of God, the defence of the Church and Christian doctrine, and for the upholding of the free councils of Christendom; and Christ our Lord will abundantly recompence them with his everlasting favour. But should any one despise this my prayer, and continue to obey that impious man, the pope, rather than God,² I, by these presents, wash my hands of the responsibility thereof, having faithfully warned their consciences, and I leave them to the supreme judgment of God, together with the pope and all his adherents.”

Such was Luther's writing of divorce; such was his reply to the pontiff's bull, and grave, indeed, is the declaration to which he thus committed himself. The charges he brings against the pope are of the highest moment, and they were not lightly preferred. This protest was spread over all Germany, and transmitted to most of the courts of Christendom.

Yet although what he had already done, seemed to be the very crowning point of audacity, Luther had in reserve a bolder proceeding still. He would not lag behind Rome. The Wittenberg monk was resolved to do all that the sovereign pontiff might dare to do. He would oppose word to word, and set bonfire against bonfire. The son of the Medicis, and the son of the Mansfield miner, went down into the lists, and in the mortal conflict which shook the world, not a blow was given on the one side, that was not returned on the other. On the 10th of December, there was to be seen on the walls of the university at Wittenberg, a notice inviting the professors and students to attend

¹ Oppressore totius sacre Scripturæ. . . . (Ibid.)

² Et papæ, impio homini, plus quam Deo obediant. (Ibid.)

at nine o'clock in the morning, at the East gate, near the holy cross. A large concourse both of the doctors and the students met, and Luther, at their head, led them in procession to the appointed spot. How many bonfires has Rome kindled in the course of ages! Luther wished to make a better application of the grand Roman principle. His sole object was to rid himself of some old papers, and fire, thought he, is made for that. A pile was prepared; one of the oldest masters of arts set fire to it; and just as the flames arose Luther was beheld approaching and throwing into it, the canon Law, the Decretals, the Clementines, and the Extravagantes of the popes, together with some of the writings of Eck and Emser. When all these were consumed, Luther laid his hand on the pope's bull, held it aloft, and said: "Whereas thou hast grieved the Lord's Holy One, may the everlasting fire grieve and consume thee!" on which he threw it into the flames. He then quietly took the road back to the city, and re-entered Wittenberg amid bursts of approbation from the crowd of doctors, professors, and students. "The Decretals," said Luther, "are like a body with a head mild as a virgin's, but whose members are full of violence like those of a lion, while the tail is crammed with cunning like a serpent. In all the laws of the popes, there is not one word to teach us who is Jesus Christ."¹ "My enemies," he said further, "have been able, by the burning of my books, to prejudice the truth in the minds of the common people, and thus to destroy souls; therefore have I burnt their books in turn. A serious struggle is now about to commence. Hitherto I have merely jested with the pope. I began this work in the name of God; it will end without me and by aid from him. Should they dare to burn my books, in which more of the Gospel is to be found, I speak without boasting, than in all the books of the pope, I shall have the stronger reasons for burning theirs, in which nothing good is to be found."

Had Luther commenced the Reformation thus, such a procedure would unquestionably have been followed by woful consequences. Fanaticism might have taken advantage of it, to throw the Church into a course of disorder and violence. But having preluded to his work by seriously expounding the instructions

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1493—1496.

of Scripture, he had wisely laid the foundation; and a strong measure, such as that which he had taken, not only could be risked without inconvenience, but might even hasten the moment when Christendom was to see her chains fall to the ground.

Luther thus solemnly declared that he had seceded from the pope and his church. After what he had written to Leo X., this might seem to him to be necessary. He accepted the excommunication that Rome had pronounced, and gave the Christian world to know that mortal war was now waged betwixt him and the pope. He burnt his vessels upon the beach and imposed on himself the necessity of advancing and fighting.

Luther was now again in Wittenberg. On the day following, the college hall was better filled than usual; men's minds were in a state of excitement; the meeting was marked by peculiar solemnity; an address from the doctor was expected. He delivered a comment on the psalms, a work he had commenced in the March of the preceding year. Pausing for a few moments at the close of his exposition, he then firmly said: "Be on your guard against the laws and statutes of the pope. I have burned the Decretals, but that is mere child's play. It were time, and more than time, that we burned the pope; that is to say," he instantly added, "the see of Rome with all its doctrines and abominations." Then, assuming a more solemn tone: "If you do not combat with your whole heart," said he, "the pope's impious government, you cannot be saved. Whosoever shall please himself with the religion and the worship of the popedom, will be lost for ever in the life to come."¹

"If a man reject these," he added, "he must expect to have all manner of risks to encounter, and even to lose his life. But far better face such perils in this world, than hold one's peace! As long as I shall live I will denounce the wound and the plague of Babylon to my brethren, lest many who are now with us should fall back into the gulph of hell."

One can hardly imagine the effect that an address of such amazing energy must have had on the meeting. "Not one of us," says the candid student who has preserved it for us, "unless it were some senseless log (as are all the papists," says he in a

¹ Muss ewig in jenem Leben verlohren seyn. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 333.)

parenthesis) "not one of us doubted that he spoke the pure truth of God. It is evident to all the faithful that doctor Luther is an angel of the living God,¹ called to feed Christ's straying flock with the word of God."

That discourse and the act itself which preceded it, mark an important epoch in the Reformation. Luther had become alienated from the pope at heart by the Leipsick disputation. But the moment of his burning the bull was that of his declaring, in the most express manner, his entire separation from the bishop of Rome and his church, and his adhesion to the universal Church as founded by the apostles of Jesus Christ. The fire he kindled at the East gate has been burning for these three hundred years.

"The pope," he would say, "has three crowns. I will tell you why: the first is against God, for he condemns religion; the second is against the emperor, for he condemns the power of the civil magistrate; the third is against society, for he condemns marriage."² When reproached with excessive violence towards the popedom: "Ah," he would reply, "I wish I had the power to make people hear nothing but claps of thunder, and that my every word were a stroke of lightning."

This firmness on Luther's part spread among his friends and fellow-countrymen. A whole nation rallied around him. Melancthon about this time addressed to the states of the empire, a writing replete with the elegance and the wisdom that distinguished its amiable author. Replying to a book ascribed to Emser, though published in the name of a Roman divine, Rhodinus, he equals anything that Luther ever wrote in force, while he at the same time expresses himself with a grace that finds admission, for all that he has to say, into the heart.

After having proved by passages from Scripture that the pope is not superior to other bishops: "What hinders," says he to the states of the empire, "our depriving the pope of the rights we have given to him?"⁴ It matters little to Luther that our

¹ *Lutherum esse Dei viventis angelum qui palabundas Christi oves pascit.* (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 123.)

² L. Opp. (W.) xxii. p. 1313.

³ Und ein jeglich Wort eine Donnercraxt wäre. (Ibid. p. 1350.)

⁴ *Quid obstat quominus papæ quod dedimus jus adimamus?* (Corp. Reform. i. p. 337.)

riches, that is to say, the wealth of Europe, is sent to Rome. But what grieves him and us, is that the laws of the pontiff and the papal government not only peril men's souls, but absolutely destroy them. Every one may judge for himself whether it be fitting or not to give his money for keeping up Roman luxury, but the common people cannot so judge of the things of religion and of sacred mysteries. Here it is, therefore, that Luther implores your faith and your zeal, and here all godly men unite with him in this prayer, some aloud and others by groans and sighs. Remember that you be Christians, the princes of a Christian people, and rescue the sad remains of Christianity from the tyranny of Antichrist. They mislead you who pretend that you have no jurisdiction over priests. Let the same feeling that animated Jehu against the priests of Baal, embolden you, by that ancient precedent, to extinguish that Roman superstition which is so much worse than the idolatry of Baal."¹ Thus spoke the gentle Melanchthon to the princes of Germany.

Some cries of alarm might be heard among the friends of the Reformation. Timid minds, prone to make extreme concessions, Staupitz in particular, gave expression to the keenest distress. "This whole affair," said Luther to him, "has been hitherto but child's play. You have yourself said that if God do not these things, they can never possibly be done. The tumult becomes so remarkably tumultuous that to me it seems not likely to be calmed down till the last day."² Thus did Luther cheer the minds of the alarmed. Three centuries have passed—the tumult has not yet subsided.

"The popedom," he continues, "is no longer what it was yesterday and before yesterday. Let it excommunicate and burn my writings . . . let it slay me . . . it shall not lay an arrest on what is advancing. Assuredly there is something portentous at our doors."³ I burnt the bull at first

1 . . . Ut extinguaris illam, multo terriorem Baalis idolatria, romanam superstitionem. (Corp. Reform. i. p. 337.)

² Tumultus egregie tumultuatur, ut nisi extremo die sedari mihi posse non videatur. (L. Epp. i. p. 541.)

³ Omnino aliquid portenti præ foribus est. (Ibid. p. 542.) (What a presentiment of the future!)

with much trembling, but now I experience more joy from that deed than anything I ever did during my whole life has given me.¹

One pauses involuntarily and finds a pleasure in reading in Luther's great soul, the whole of that future which was then in preparation. "O my father," says he to Staupitz in coming to a close, "pray for the word of God and for me. I am hurried along and tossed about by these waves."²

Thus the combat declared itself on all sides and the combatants threw away the scabbards of their swords. The word of God re-asserted its rights and unseated him who had taken the place of God himself. The whole fabric of society was convulsed. Selfish persons are at all times to be found who would allow human society to sleep on in error and in corruption; but wise men, even admitting that they are timid, think otherwise. "We well know," says the mild and moderate Melancthon, "that statesmen have a horror for innovations; and it must be confessed that in that sad confusion called human life, discords, such even as arise from the most justifiable causes, are ever contaminated with more or less of evil. Nevertheless, in the Church, God's command must of necessity be preferred to all things human.³ God threatens with his everlasting wrath, such as strive to make his truth a thing of nought. Therefore was it Luther's duty, a Christian duty, and one which he could not set aside, especially considering that he was a doctor in the Church of God, to reprehend those pernicious errors which disorderly men had disseminated with such inconceivable effrontery. If

1 Primum trepidus et orans, sed nunc lætior quam ullo totius vitæ meæ facto. (Ibid)

² Ego fluctibus his rapior et volvor (Ibid.)

³ Sed tamen in Ecclesia necesse est anteferri mandatum Dei omnibus rebus humanis. (Melanct. Vit. Lutheri.)

⁴ What Melancthon says here is applicable to all times. Now, as then, strenuous opposition to corruptions in the Church awakens suspicion and persecution among statesmen. Now, as then, are the dissensions, thus excited, alloyed with an admixture of evil, which affords a pretext for justifying persecution. Yet now, too, this ought not to make Christians hang back, instead of following God's word and the suggestions of conscience alone.—L. R.—Even Christian statesmen are too apt to forget that the same revelation from God by which the Church happens to exist, must supply the standard of its purity, and that as not even the purest character on earth is without faults, which are apt to prejudice his noblest endeavours by being associated with them, still less, when the opponents of corruption and abuse come to form a party, can they embarrass themselves from adherents whose imprudent zeal, or other personal defects, are apt to be unjustly confounded with what is excellent in the views of the body at large with which they are associated. TR.

discord be the parent of many evils, as to my great sorrow I perceive to be the case," adds the sage Philip, "it is the fault of those who originally diffused those errors, and of those who, in the intensity of their diabolical hatred, now seek to maintain them."

All, however, did not think thus. Luther was overwhelmed with reproaches; the storm burst upon him from all quarters. "He stands quite alone!" said some; "he is a teacher of novelties!" said others.

"Who knows," said Luther in the consciousness of the vocation addressed to him from on high, "who knows whether God have not chosen me and called me,¹ and whether they ought not to fear, that in despising me they are despising God himself.

. . . . Moses was alone when Israel went out of Egypt; Elias alone at the time of king Ahab; Isaiah alone at Jerusalem; Ezekiel alone at Babylon God has never chosen as a prophet either the high priest or any other great personage, but for the most part low and despised persons, at one time even a shepherd, Amos. Saints have been bound in duty, at all periods, to reprehend the great, kings, princes, priests, and learned men, at the peril of their lives And has it not been so, also, under the New Testament? Ambrose was alone at his time; after him Jerome stood alone; later still, Augustine was alone I say not that I am a prophet,² but I do say that they ought to fear, just because I am alone, and because they are many. What I am sure of is this, that the word of God is with me and that it is not with them."

"It is said likewise," he continues, "that I put forth novelties, and that it is not to be believed that all the doctors have been so long deceived.

"No, I preach no new things. But I say that all Christian doctrines have disappeared among the very persons whose office it was to preserve them, to wit, the men of learning and the bishops. I doubt not, nevertheless, that the truth has remained with some hearts, were it only with infants in the cradle.³ Poor

¹ Wer weiss ob mich Gott duzu berufen und erwählt hat. Grounds for maintaining the articles condemned by the bull from Rome. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 338.)

² Ich sage nicht dass Ich ein Prophet sey. (Ibid.)

³ Und sollten's eitel Kinder in der Wiege seyn. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 339.)

peasants, simple children, now comprehend Jesus Christ better than do the pope, bishops, and doctors.

"I am accused of rejecting the holy doctors of the Church. I do not reject them; but since all these doctors seek to prove their writings by holy Scripture, that must necessarily be clearer and purer than they are. Who would think of proving an obscure discourse by one obscurer still? Thus, then, necessity obliges us to have recourse to the Bible as all doctors do, appealing to it to pronounce on their writings; for the Bible alone is lord and master.

"But, it is said, powerful men persecute him. And is it not clear, according to scripture, that persecutors are ordinarily in the wrong and the persecuted in the right; that the majority has ever been on the side of falsehood and the small minority on the side of truth? Truth has at all times caused disturbance."¹

Luther then passes under review the propositions which the bull condemned as heretical, and demonstrates their truth by proofs taken from holy Scripture. With what force, in particular, does he not maintain the doctrine of grace?

"What," says he, "nature is able, forsooth, previous to and without grace, to hate sin, to shun it, to repent of it, while even after grace has come, that nature loves sin, seeks after it, longs for it, and ceases not to combat grace and to be angry with it; a fact which makes the saints groan continually! . . . It is as if one were to say, that a huge tree which I could not bend by applying my utmost force to it, bends of itself on my leaving it; or that a torrent, which dykes and walls fail to arrest, stops of itself on simply being let alone . . . No, it is not by reflecting on sin and its consequences that we come to repent; but it is by contemplating Jesus Christ, his wounds, and his infinite love."² The knowledge of sin must flow from repentance and not repentance from the knowledge of sin. Knowledge is the fruit, repentance is the tree. With us, fruits grow on the trees, but it appears that in the states of the holy father, trees grow on the fruits."³

¹ Wahrheit hat allezeit rumort. (Ibid. p. 340.)

² Man soll zuvor Christum in seine Wunden sehen, und aus deselben seine Libe geyen uns. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 351.)

³ How much is not this doctrine of Luther's, the pure doctrine of the gospel, again perverted by many in the Protestant (Lutheran) and also in our Reformed

The bold doctor, although protesting, yet retracts some of his propositions. Amazement will cease on learning the manner in which he does it. After quoting the four propositions on the indulgences condemned by the bull,¹ he simply adds:

“To the honour of the holy and learned bull, I retract all that I have ever taught touching the indulgences. If there has been any justice in burning my books, this is no doubt because I had conceded somewhat to the pope in the doctrine of the indulgences, and therefore do I myself condemn them to the flames.”

He retracts, also, with respect to John Huss: “I now say, not that *some*, but that *all* the articles of John Huss are wholly Christian. In condemning Huss, the pope condemned the gospel. I have done five times more than he, and yet I much fear I have not done enough. Huss merely says that a wicked pope is not a member of Christendom; but as for me, were St. Peter himself presiding at Rome at this day, I should deny that the pope was of God’s appointment.”

XI. The Reformer’s words of power were now penetrating into all men’s minds and promoting their emancipation. The whole nation caught fire from the sparks that flew from every one of them. But a grave question remained to be solved. Would the prince, within whose territories Luther resided, favour the execution of the bull, or would he oppose it? The answer seemed doubtful. The elector was then, together with the other princes of the empire, at Aix-la-Chapelle, where the crown that had been worn by Charlemagne, was placed on the head of the youngest, yet the mightiest monarch of Christendom. An unheard-of pomp and magnificence were displayed at the ceremony, which was no sooner over than Charles V, the princes, ministers, and ambassadors went to Cologne. Aix-la-Chapelle, which was afflicted with the plague, seemed on this occasion to empty itself into that ancient city on the banks of the Rhine.

Among the crowd of foreigners that thronged Cologne, there were two nuncios from the pope, Marino Carracioli and Jerome Aleander. Carracioli, who had previously been employed in a

Church, who either would begin by making themselves virtuous by their own efforts, or, while apparently condemning this course, still would first discover the marks of grace in themselves, before they embrace grace by faith.—L. R.

¹ 19th to 22d. (Ibid. p. 363.)

mission to Maximilian, was charged with felicitations to the new emperor and with powers to treat with him on political affairs; but the suppression of the Reformation was perceived by Rome to require for its satisfactory settlement a nuncio specially charged with that object, and possessing the character, the address, and the activity it required. Aleander was selected for the task.¹ This person, who at a later date was decorated with the purple of the cardinalship, was of rather an ancient family, it would appear, and was not of Jewish parentage, as has been said. The criminal Borgia had called him to Rome to act as secretary to his son—that Cæsar whose murderous sword made all Rome tremble.² “Like master, like man,” says an historian who likens Aleander to Alexander VI., but this we think too severe a judgment. On Borgia’s death, Aleander devoted himself to study with fresh ardour. His acquaintance with Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic, was such as to procure for him the title of the most learned man of his age. He threw his whole soul into all that he undertook. His zeal in the study of languages fell in nothing short of that with which he afterwards set himself to persecute the Reformation. Leo X. took him into his service. Protestant historians speak of his Epicurean morals; Romanist historians of the purity of his manners.³ It would appear that he was fond of luxury, scenic representations, and diversions. “Aleander lived at Venice as a base Epicurean and in high dignities,” says of him his old friend Erasmus. All agree in acknowledging that he was vehement, indefatigable, imperious, and devoted to the pope. Eck appears as the cholerick and intrepid champion of the school; Aleander as the haughty ambassador of the proud court of the pontiffs.

Rome had made all her preparations for the ruin of the Wittemberg monk. The post of representative of the pope at the emperor’s coronation, was a mere secondary mission for

¹ Studium flagrantissimum religionis, ardor indolis incredibile quanta solertia (Pallavicini, i. p. 84.)

² Capello, Venitian ambassador at Rome in 1500, says of him: Tutta Roma trema di esso ducha non li faza amazzar (Relatione M S C, Archives of Vienna, extracted by Ranke.)

³ Er wird übel als ein gebolrner Jude und schændlicher Epicurer beschriben. (Seckend. 288.)—Integritas Vitæ quâ prænoscebatur (Pallavicini, i. p. 84.)

Aleander, but it was fitted to facilitate his principal task by the consideration which it secured for him. The essential object of his being there, was to prevail on Charles to crush the rising Reformation.¹ "The pope," said the nuncio to the emperor, as he delivered to him the bull, "the pope who has carried his point with so many and such great princes, knows very well how to bring three grammarians to their good behaviour." He alluded by this to Luther, Melancthon, and Erasmus. Erasmus was present at that audience.

Hardly had Aleander arrived at Cologne, when, in concert with Carracioli, he put everything in movement with the view of procuring orders for the burning of Luther's heretical books throughout the empire, but especially under the eyes of the princes of Germany, while thus convened at Cologne. To this Charles V. had already given his consent in as far as concerned his hereditary estates. Great was the agitation that now prevailed. It was said to Charles's ministers and to the nuncios themselves, "such measures, far from curing, will only aggravate the evil. Think you that Luther's doctrines are to be found no where but in the books you commit to the flames? They are written where you cannot reach, in the heart of the nation² .

. . . If you would employ force, it would need to be that of swords innumerable, drawn for the purpose of massacring an infinite multitude.³ A few faggots brought together for the purpose of burning some sheets of paper, will serve no purpose; and such arms are little befitting either the emperor's or the pontiff's dignity." The nuncio defended his bonfires: "These flames," he would say, "are a sentence of condemnation, written in gigantic characters, and understood equally by persons at hand and others at a distance, both by the learned and the ignorant, and those even who cannot read."

But, in point of fact, it was not books and papers, but Luther, himself, that the nuncio had in his eye. "These flames," he rejoined, "are inadequate to the purpose of purifying the infected air of Germany.⁴ They may terrify the simple but they do not

¹ Cui tota sollicitudo inniteretur nascentis hæresis evellendæ. (Pall. i. p. 83.)

² Altiusque insculptam in mentibus universæ fere Germaniæ. (Ibid. i. p. 88.)

³ In vi innumerabilium gladiatorum qui infinitum populum trucidarent. (Ibid.)

⁴ Non satis ad expurgandum aerem Germaniæ jam tabificum. (Cardinal Pallavicini, i. p. 89.)

correct the wicked. We must have an edict from the emperor aimed at Luther's head."¹

Aleander did not find the emperor so easily dealt with, when the question was no longer about the books, but about the person of the Reformer.

"Hardly seated on the throne," said he to Aleander, "I cannot, without the advice of my counsellors and the consent of the princes, strike such a blow at an immense faction, surrounded by such powerful defenders. Let us first know what our father, the elector of Saxony, thinks of this affair; we shall then see what reply ought to be sent to the pope."² Accordingly, it was the elector upon whom the nuncios went to try their artifices and the power of their eloquence. On the first Sunday of November, Frederick having been present at mass in the monastery of the Cordeliers, Carracioli and Aleander craved an audience of him.³ He received them in presence of the bishop of Trent and of several of his counsellors. Carracioli first presented to the elector the pope's brief. Of a milder spirit than Aleander, he thought he might gain over the prince by flatteries, and began to laud both him and his ancestors. "We look to you," said he, "for the salvation of the Roman Church and of the Roman empire."

But the impetuous Aleander, eager to come to the point, stepped bluntly forward and interrupted his colleague, who modestly gave way. "It is I and Eck," said he, "who have been entrusted with Martin's affair. See the immense peril into which that man is plunging the Christian commonwealth. If a remedy be not speedily applied, it is all over with the empire. How have the Greeks been ruined but by abandoning the pope? You cannot maintain your connection with Luther without separating from Jesus Christ.⁴ In the name of his Holiness I require of you two things: first, that you burn Luther's writings; secondly, that you visit himself with the punishment he deserves, or at least

¹ Cæsaris edictum in caput . . . Lutheri. (Ibid.)

² Audiamus antea hac in re patrem nostrum Fredericum. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 117.)

³ Cui ita loquenti de improvviso sese addit Aleander. . . . (Ibid.)

⁴ Non posse cum Luthero conjungi, quin sejungeretur a Christo. (Pallavicini, p. 86.)

that you deliver him up as a prisoner to the pope.¹ The emperor and all the princes of the empire have declared themselves ready to accede to what we require; you alone still delay." . . .

Frederick replied through the medium of the bishop of Trent "This is too weighty an affair to be decided upon at this moment. We will let you know what we may determine with regard to it."

The position was a difficult one in which Frederick found himself placed. What part could he well adopt? On the one side were ranged the emperor, the princes of the empire, and the high priest of Christendom, from under whose authority the elector had no thought as yet of withdrawing himself; on the other, a monk, a feeble monk; for it was no one but him that was asked for. Charles' reign was just commencing, and shall it be Frederick, the eldest and the wisest of all the princes of Germany, who is to throw disunion into the empire? Besides, that piety of the olden time which had led him even to the tomb of Christ—how can he renounce that? . . .

Other voices then claimed a hearing. A young prince, who afterwards wore the electoral crown, John Frederick, son of duke John, a nephew of the elector and pupil of Spalatin, then seventeen years old, and whose reign was marked by heavy calamities, had cordially imbibed a great love for the truth, and was warmly attached to Luther.² On seeing him smitten with anathemas from Rome, he embraced his cause with all the warmth of a young Christian, and of a young prince. He wrote to the doctor, he wrote to his uncle, and nobly urged the latter to protect Luther against his enemies. Spalatin, on the other hand, deeply depressed as he often was, Pontanus, and some other counsellors who were then with the elector at Cologne, represented to the prince that he could not abandon the Reformer.³

In the midst of this wide-spread agitation, one man alone remained unmoved; and he was Luther. While people were endeavouring to save him through the intervention of the great

¹ Ut de eo supplicium sumeret, vel captum pontifici transmitteret. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 117.)

² . . . Sonderliche Gunst und Gnade zu mir unwürdiglich, und den grossen Willen und Lust zu der heiligen göttlichen Wahrheit. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 558, to John Frederick, 30th October, 1520.)

³ Assiduo flabello ministrorum, illi jugiter suadentium ne Lutherum desereret. (Pallavicini, i. p. 86.)

in his favour, the monk, in his cloister at Wittenberg, thought it was rather his part to save those great folks of the world. "Had the gospel," he wrote to Spalatin, "been of a nature to be propagated or maintained by the powers of this world, God would not have entrusted it to fishermen.¹ It does not belong to this world's princes and high priests to defend the Word of God.² They have enough to do to shelter themselves from the judgments of the Lord and his Anointed. If I speak, it is in order that they may come to know the divine Word and be saved by it."

Luther's expectation was not doomed to disappointment. The faith which had found a harbour in a monastery at Wittenberg, exercised its power in the palaces of Cologne. Frederick's heart, though it may have wavered for a moment, became more and more resolute. He shuddered at the thought of delivering an innocent man into the cruel hands of his enemies; and justice, rather than the pope, was the motto he adopted. On the 4th of November, his counsellors, in compliance with instructions received from him, told the Roman nuncios when met at the elector's residence, and in presence of the bishop of Trent, that he had seen with much pain Dr. Eck take advantage of his absence, to include in the condemnation divers personages not mentioned in the bull; but since his leaving Saxony an immense number of the learned and of the ignorant, of ecclesiastics and laymen, might have united in adhering to the cause and appeal of

¹ *Evangelium si tale esset, quod potentatibus mundi aut propagaretur aut servaretur, non illud piscatoribus Deus demandasset.* (L. Epp. i. p. 521.)

² This, too, deserves remark at the present day. In the religious controversies of our time, truth is not on the side of the party which is defended by the great ones of the earth. Those who stand up for the truth ought not to be jealous of that protection, or to endeavour after it. This strikes me as a remnant of human weakness and fear, discoverable in many who perceive what is wrong in the Church, and would willingly see it corrected, but dare not attempt to do so themselves, and are content to hope that God will ere long work a favourable change in the heart of the government. Yet as the result of this, all remains undone, and matters become daily worse. Let us consider this, that God employed not the mighty of this world, but fishermen, for the propagation and defence of his gospel. Do we keep our eye on God alone, and can we dare to venture all upon Him, then is hope not ashamed, but God knows the right time to employ some of the great of this world, as in Luther's case, he employed the elector of Saxony in protecting the cause of truth. Yet we must not wait for this—we must not hand the matter over to them, but, even as Luther did, we must, without trusting to such prospects, take up the cause of truth boldly, and energetically defend it against all opposition.—L. R.

Luther;¹ that neither his imperial majesty, nor any one whosoever, had demonstrated to him that Luther's writings had been refuted, and had only to be cast into the fire; and that he required that Dr. Luther, provided with a safe-conduct, might have an opportunity of appearing before learned, pious, and impartial judges.

On hearing this declaration, Aleander, Carracioli, and their followers, withdrew in order to deliberate.² This was the first time that the elector, had given any public intimation of his intentions with regard to the Reformer, and these were very different from what the nuncios had expected. They had thought that as the elector by persisting in his course of impartiality, might bring upon himself dangers, the extent of which none could foresee, he would not hesitate to sacrifice the monk. But their machinations were doomed to misgive before a power upon which they had not calculated; the love of justice and of truth.

On being admitted anew to an interview with the elector's advisers, "I should much like to know," said the imperious Aleander, "what the elector would think, were one of his subjects to choose for his judge the king of France, or some other foreign prince." And perceiving at length that nothing could shake the Saxon counsellors: "We will execute the bull," said he, "we will prosecute and burn Luther's writings. As for his person," he added, with an affectation of contemptuous indifference, "the pope does not care to soil his hands with the blood of the wretch."

On the news of the reply made by the elector to the nuncios reaching Wittemberg, Luther's friends were in a transport of joy, Melanchthon and Amsdorff, in particular, indulged the most flattering hopes on the occasion. "The German nobility," said Melanchthon, "will shape the course they take after the example of that prince whom they follow in all things, as their Nestor. If Homer called his hero the bulwark of the Greeks, why should not Frederick be called the *bulwark of the Germans?*"³

¹ Ut ingens vis populi doctorum et rudium sacrorum et profanorum seae conjunxerint. . . . (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 116.)

² Quo audito, Marinus et Aleander seorsim cum suis locuti sunt? . . . (Ibid. p. 117.)

³ Homerica adpellatione murum Germaniæ. (Corp. Ref. i. 272.)

That oracle of courts, torch of the schools, and light of the world, Erasmus, was then in Cologne, having been invited thither by several princes who wanted his advice. Erasmus, at the time of the Reformation, was chief of the golden-mean party; at least so he thought, but he was mistaken, for when truth and error are opposed to each other, justice is not the mean. He was chief of that philosophical and university party which had been pretending to correct Rome for ages, without having ever succeeded in doing so; he was the representative of human wisdom, but that was too weak a wisdom to pull down the pinnacles of the popedom. For this there was required that wisdom of God, which man often calls foolishness, but at the voice of which the mountains melt. Erasmus did not wish either to throw himself into Luther's arms, or to take his place at the feet of the pope. He hesitated, and often halted betwixt those two powers, drawn at times towards Luther, and anon thrown back upon the pope. He had pronounced in favour of Luther in a letter to the archbishop of Maintz. "The last spark of Christian piety seems ready to go out," he had said to Albert, "and this is what has moved Luther's heart; he cares nothing either about money or honours."¹ But this letter, published by the imprudent Ulrich von Hutten, brought so many annoyances upon Erasmus that he resolved to act more prudently for the future. Besides, he was charged with being an accomplice of Luther's, and the latter hurt his feelings by indiscreet expressions. "Almost all good people," said he, "side with Luther,² but I perceive we are marching towards a revolt. . . I would not have any one associate my name with his. This injures me without benefiting him."³ "Be it so," replied Luther; "since this annoys you, I promise you never to mention you or any of your friends." Such was the man to whom both the enemies and the friends of the Reformer applied for advice.

Aware that the opinion of a man so much respected as Erasmus, must carry much weight, the elector invited the

¹ Et futurum erat . . . ut tandem prorsus extingueretur illa scintilla christianæ pietatis; hæc moverunt animum Lutheri . . . qui nec honores ambit, nec pecuniam cupit. (Erasm. Epp. Londoni, 1642, p. 586.)

² Favent vero ferme boni omnes. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 205.)

³ Er will von mir ungenennt seyn. (L. Epp. p. 525.) Nam ea res me gravat, et Lutherum non sublevat. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 206.)

illustrious Hollander to come and see him. Erasmus complied, and an interview took place on the 5th of December, which was not witnessed by Luther's friends without secret misgivings. The elector stood before the fire place, with Spalatin at his side, when Erasmus was introduced. "What is your opinion of Luther," Frederick immediately asked him. The wary Erasmus, surprised at so direct a question, first sought to elude giving a reply; and so he twisted his mouth, bit his lips, and said nothing. On this the elector, making large eyes, as Spalatin tells us he usually did to persons whom he wished to answer him precisely, gave Erasmus a piercing look.¹ Not well knowing how to escape from his embarrassment, the latter said at length, in a half sportive tone: "Luther has committed two grand faults; he has attacked the crown of the pope and the bellicies of the monks."² The elector smiled, yet gave his interlocutor to understand that he spoke seriously; whereupon, throwing off his reserve, Erasmus said: "The origin of this whole dispute is to be found in the hatred the monks entertain for literature, and their alarm at the prospect of an end being put to their tyranny. What have they not done to ruin Luther? Clamours, cabals, hatred, slanders, have all been employed against him. The more virtuous a man is, and the more he is attached to the doctrines of the Gospel, the less, likewise, is he opposed to Luther."³ The hard terms of the bull have made all good people indignant, and no one can recognise in them the meekness of a vicar of Jesus Christ.⁴ Of so many universities, two only have condemned Luther; and, after all, they have condemned, not convicted him. Let no one deceive himself, the danger is greater than some suppose. Arduous affairs are pressing upon us.⁵

. . . To begin the reign of Charles with an act so odious as the imprisonment of Luther, would be a melancholy omen. The world thirsts for Gospel truth,⁶ let us beware of sinfully

¹ Da sperret auch wahrlich mein gnädigster Herr sein Augen nur wohl auf.
. . . (Spalatin, Hist. M.S. in Seckend. p. 291.)

² Lutherus peccavit in duobus, nempe quod tetigit coronam pontificis et ventres monachorum. (See book iii. chapter 6.)

³ Cum optimus quisque et evangelicæ doctrinæ proximus dicatur, minime offensus Luthero. (Axiomata Erasmi in L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 115.)

⁴ Bullæ sævitia probos omnes offendit, ut indigna, mitissimo Christi vicario. (Ibid.)

⁵ Urgent ardua negotia. . . . (Ibid.)

⁶ Mundus sitit veritatem evangelicam. . . . (Ibid.)

resisting such a feeling. Let the case be examined by men of grave character and sound judgment; this best befits the dignity of the pope himself."

Thus spoke Erasmus to the elector. The reader will perhaps be astonished at such boldness; but Erasmus knew the person to whom he spoke. Spalatin was overjoyed at it. He went out with Erasmus, and accompanied him as far as count Nuenar's, the provost of Cologne, where the illustrious scholar was staying. On returning to his own quarters, the latter took up his pen, and, in a fit of frankness, sat down, wrote out the substance of what he had said to the elector, and handed it to Spalatin. But fear, ere long, resumed its sway over the timid Erasmus; the courage he had acquired from the presence of the elector and his chaplain, deserted him, and dreading lest the rash document should fall into the hands of the terrible nuncio, he besought Spalatin to return it. But it was too late.

Strengthened by the opinion of Erasmus, the elector spoke in a more decided manner to the emperor. Erasmus himself, in the course of certain conferences held, like those of Nicodemus of old, during the night,¹ made an effort to persuade Charles's counsellors that the whole case ought to be remitted to impartial judges. Possibly he may have entertained the hope of being himself appointed arbiter in a dispute which threatened to divide the Christian world—a task that would have flattered his vanity. But, at the same time, in order that he might not damage his interests at Rome, he wrote the most submissive letters to Leo X., and Leo sent him kind answers. This put poor Aleander to the torture.² He would fain, from love to the pope, have warmly reproved the pope; for Erasmus made no secret of these letters from the pontiff, and they still farther augmented his credit. The nuncio complained of them at Rome; and was told in reply, that he must wink at the man's mischievous proceedings, as the course required by prudence, and that a door ought to be left open for repentance.^{3 4}

¹ *Sollicitatis per nocturnos congressus*, (Pallavicini, i. p. 87.)

² *Quæ male torquebant Aleandrum*. (Ibid.)

³ *Prudentis erat consilii, hominis pravitatis dissimulare*. (Ibid. p. 88.)

⁴ To the above details respecting the conduct and sentiments of Erasmus, we on this occasion may add the following passages from Milner:

"There is however, no doubt, that Erasmus heartily disapproved the severe and

Charles V. himself adopted that see-saw system which consisted in flattering the pope and the elector alternately, and in appearing to incline to one or other by turns, according to the necessities of the moment. His ministers hinted to Aleander what the plan was that their master wished to follow. "The Emperor," said they, "will behave to the pope as the pope would to the emperor; for he has no idea of augmenting the power of his rivals and, in particular, that of the king of France."¹ At these words the imperious nuncio could not repress his indignation. "What!" said he, "even were the pope to abandon the emperor, ought the latter, on that account, to abandon religion?² Should Charles desire thus to avenge himself . . . let him tremble! Such dastardly conduct will turn against himself." But the imperial diplomatists were not to be shaken by the nuncio's threats.

XII. If the Roman legates failed in their attempts to gain over the mighty ones of the earth, the inferior agents of the popedom succeeded in disquieting the weak. The militia of Rome had heard their chief's command. Fanatical priests employed the bull in frightening people's consciences, and well

despotic proceedings of the Roman court in the condemnation of Luther. The popish historians inform us, that he held the pope's bull to be a forgery, and would not be convinced of the contrary, till Aleander had permitted him to examine it. That after this he went about by night to the princes and their friends, for the purpose of alienating their affections from the pope and from Aleander, telling them the bull had been extorted, contrary to the pope's real inclination, by the artifices of malevolent persons; and that in a conversation with Aleander, he was very pressing that the resolution to burn Luther's books might be dropped or at least retarded." (Milner, vol. iv. p. 488.)

"The legates of the pope, in their turn, are said to have plied Erasmus closely with the offer of a rich bishoprick, if he would undertake to write against Luther. But he answered them, 'Luther is too great a man for me to encounter. I do not even always understand him. However, to speak plainly, he is so extraordinary a man that I learn more from a single page in his books, than from all the writings of Thomas Aquinas.' Such was the reputation of Luther for profound knowledge in divinity.

"From little anecdotes of this kind, we often learn more of the real judgment of mankind concerning extraordinary characters, than from long historical details." (Ibid.) Tr.

¹ *Cæsarem ita se gesturum erga Pontificem, uti se Pontifex ergo Cæsarem gereret. . . .* (Pallavicini, i. p. 91.)

² If religion be "the wisdom that is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy," (James iii. 17). how well might we apply this language of the nuncio to the popedom itself, which has so often abandoned purity of doctrine and morals, peace, meekness, mercy, charity, impartiality, and sincerity, in attempting to promote its own aggrandisement, and found "such dastardly conduct turn against itself" in the contempt which it has gained for itself even in countries filled with its own professed followers, and into which it has too often brought the Gospel, and indeed all religion, having mischievously associated them, in the popular apprehension, with its own bad qualities. Tr.

meaning though little enlightened ecclesiastics, regarded it as a sacred duty to comply with the pope's instructions. It was in the confessional that Luther commenced his conflict with Rome;¹ it was in the confessional, too, that Rome carried on her hostilities against the adherents of the Reformer. Though outwardly an object of national scorn, the bull became a mighty engine in those solitary tribunals. "Have you read Luther's writings?" asked the confessors; "have you any of them in your possession? do you consider them as true or as heretical?" And if the penitent hesitated to pronounce the anathema, the priest refused absolution. Many consciences were disquieted, and people generally were much agitated. This clever manœuvre threatened to bring back under the yoke of Rome whole multitudes that had been already gained over to the Gospel, and Rome congratulated herself on having erected, in the thirteenth century, a tribunal which was destined to bring the free consciences of Christians under bondage to priests.² As long as that tribunal lasts, her dominion will last too.³

Luther became aware of all this, but what could he alone do in order to disconcert this manœuvre? He could speak, and in speaking boldly out, lay the weapons he had to employ.⁴ He

¹ See book iii. chapter 4th.

² In 1215, by the 4th Lateran council under Innocent III.

³ Never, assuredly, has the cunning of Rome invented, or at least applied to her own purposes, a cleverer instrument than the secret confessional. She thereby rules men's consciences, and keeps her eye upon the slightest indications of better convictions, in order to smother these at their birth, and to remove every means by which they might be produced. Well may people appeal to the invincible security for its permanence which the popedom derives from it. Yet we can hence conclude nothing in favour of its divine origin or excellence, but much in proof of the astuteness of the spirit which still keeps it up as a means of opposing the true kingdom of Christ.—L. R.

⁴ Few things are more worthy of remark in the history of the reformation, than that it owed its conquests over men's hearts and consciences so much to "speaking out"—in this so closely resembling the first preaching of the Gospel by our Lord and his apostles, and differing so widely from the policy by which the disciples of Loyola in particular, subsequently succeeded in *stealing back* so large a part of Europe, after it had been *openly* rescued from the papal sway. Our Lord could, and did appeal to the openness of all his proceedings. Nicodemus, indeed, came to him by night but not because he was sent for, and in the conversation that ensued, there was no insinuation or flattery attempted by our Lord in order to gain over that "ruler of the Jews." On the contrary, nothing could have been more frank or explicit than the Saviour's dealing with him. But what a contrast to such conduct on the part of our Lord and his apostles, is presented by the policy which, on finding that persecution and cruelty only prejudiced its interests, the popedom has employed, and which until this hour its agents are employing, in order to make proselytes—worming themselves as independent laymen into courts and other public circles, while in reality bound by vows of obedience to secret chiefs—alluring young persons of both sexes by

could speak; his words would reach those alarmed consciences, those terrified souls, and would strengthen and comfort them. A powerful impulse behoved to be communicated. The voice of Luther, therefore, made itself be heard. He addressed penitents with a courageous warmth, and with a noble disdain of all secondary considerations. "When asked whether or not you approve of my books," said he, "let your answer be, You are a confessor, not an inquisitor, or a gaoler. It is my duty to confess what my conscience bids me say: it is not yours to probe my heart and discover its secrets. Grant me absolution, and then dispute with Luther, with the pope, with whomsoever you please; but make not the sacrament of penitence a matter of contention and animosity. And should the confessor refuse to yield, then," says Luther, "I would rather dispense with his absolution. Be not disquieted: should man refuse to absolve you, God will absolve you. Rejoice at the thought of being absolved by God himself, and present yourselves without fear at the sacrament of the altar. The priest shall answer at the last judgment, for the absolution which he has refused you. They may indeed refuse us the sacrament, but they cannot deprive us of the efficacy and the grace which God has attached to it. It is neither in their will nor in their power, but in our faith, that God has placed salvation. Leave sacrament, altar, priest, and church; the Word of God which has been condemned in the bull, is greater than all these things. The soul may dispense with the sacrament but it cannot live without the Word. Christ, the true bishop, will charge himself with your spiritual nourishment."¹

Thus did the voice of Luther penetrate into alarmed families and consciences, to inspire them with courage and with faith. But it was not enough that he should defend himself; he felt that he ought to attack and deal blow after blow. A Roman theologian, called Ambrose Catharin, had written against him. "I will stir the bile of this Italian beast,"^{2 3} said Luther; and

specious pretences into their seminaries—and gaining Protestant support to their public measures, by a dextrous concealment of their true object, and of the real intentions of their abettors. Such weapons may promote the cause of error, but they are alike despised by truth, and dangerous to her interests. TR.

¹ Und wird dich der rechte Bischoff Christus selber speisen. . . . (L. Opp. lxxvii. p. 565.)

² Italicae bestiae bilem movebo. (L. Epp. i. p. 570.)

³ The author ought to have mentioned that Luther seems first to have been

he kept his word. In his reply he proved, by the revelations made to Daniel and St. John, by St. Paul's Epistles, and those of St. Peter and St. Jude, that the kingdom of Antichrist, foretold and described in the Bible, was the popedom.¹ "I know for certain," says he in conclusion, "that our Lord Jesus Christ lives and reigns. In the strength of this faith I should not fear many thousand popes. May God visit us at last according to his infinite power, and make to shine forth the day of his Son's glorious coming, in which he will destroy that wicked one. And let all the people say, Amen!"²

And all the people did say, Amen. Men's souls were seized with a holy dread. They saw nothing less than Antichrist

called by his antagonist "beast," "barbarian" and "blockhead," and that from his repeated allusions to this contemptuous language, his feelings, both as a man and as a German, must have been sorely aggrieved. He had besides a special ground for speaking contemptuously of those Italians, who deserved it, inasmuch as he must have wished to counteract the stupid respect which he complains that his countrymen showed for everything coming from Italy. *At cum hæc tenus, says he, quidquid vel Italiæ vel Romæ nomine jactaretur, incredibili stupore loco numinis adoraverimus, idque homines fastuosi et superciliosi sentirent, quasi perpetuum illis Germania ludibrium futura sit. Impudenti fronte audent nobis adhuc quotidie fœdiora portenta obtrudere, cum adhuc BESTIAS, adhuc BARBAROS, adhuc TRUNCOS nos esse sine fine somniant.* From the following expressions, too, it would appear that Luther was quite used to be called a beast, but had not yet become very patient under the insult:—"qui denique humanitate illi nos sibi BESTIAS comparaverint."—"Mihî uni mortalium, imo BESTIÆ, ne unus quidem error ignoscetur."—Quanto justius erat mihi BESTIÆ et BARBARO, &c.—Tamen ut videat homo Italus, et BESTIAS GERMANIÆ nonnihil habere humanitatis . . . cum tum STULTA STOLIDAQUE BESTIA . . . Sic est ingenium BESTIARUM . . . BESTIAS carere libero arbitrio . . . Dabit et hoc BESTIÆ præcipiti Catharinus . . . dicet mihi Catharinus, Tu BESTIA doctrinam impugnare voluisti . . ." This harping on the word *Bestia*, accompanied with such epithets as *stulta*, *stolida*, *præceps*, and all occurring within the compass of a single page, sufficiently proves that the term had originated with his adversary, and was keenly resented by Luther. See *Ad Librum Erim. Mag. nostri M. Ambrosii Catherini, Defensoris Sylvestri Prieratis acerrimi. Responsio Marti. Luthe. Cum exposita Visione Daniel viii. de Antichristo.* Tr.

¹ Ostendat illum diem adventus gloriæ Filii sui, quo destruat iniquus iste. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 162.)

² The more men contemplate the popedom, and attend to its turbulent proceedings even in our own days, the more will this idea seem to be well founded. Even although the particular Antichrist which is more strictly referred to in the prophecies, may yet be to be looked for in the future, its spirit at least exhibits itself in the popedom, and who can tell us that that particular Antichrist will not issue from the popedom? Even now the unruly proceedings (*woelingen*) of the latter warn us in our days to have our eye awake to the subject. In vain do the abettors of the popedom appeal to the recognition of Christ's true Godhead in the Romish Church, the disowning of which they consider to be the distinctive mark of Antichrist. Here, however, they are contradicted by some of their own doctors of theology, some of whom are known to have branded at times such and such popes with the name of Antichrist, who, though not denying the Saviour's Godhead, were thought by them to have reached the papal chair by sinister courses.—L. R.

seated on the pontifical throne. This new idea, an idea that derived intense interest and power from the descriptions of the prophets, thus launched by Luther into the midst of the men of his age, inflicted the most terrible blow upon Rome. Faith in the word superseded that which the Church had till then engrossed; and the pope's authority, after having so long been an object of popular adoration, now became an object of hatred and terror.

Germany replied to the bull by surrounding Luther with her shouts of approbation. The plague was now in Wittemberg, yet every day witnessed the arrival of new students; and from four to six hundred disciples habitually took their places in the lecture rooms as students under Luther and Melancthon. The church of the monastery and that of the town, were both too small for the numbers that eagerly flocked to hear the Reformer preach; and the prior of the Augustinians feared, with respect to both churches, that their walls might fall in from the pressure of the crowd.¹ But this movement of public opinion was not confined within the walls of Wittemberg; it pervaded all Germany. Princes, lords, and learned men sent to Luther, from all quarters, letters full of comfort and of faith. Of these the Doctor showed the chaplain more than thirty.²

The margrave of Brandenburg arrived at Wittemberg one day with several other princes, on a visit to Luther. "They wanted to see the man,"³ says the latter. Every body, in fact, wished to see *the man* whose words were agitating whole nations, and making the pontiff of the West to feel that his throne was sinking under him.

The enthusiasm of Luther's friends was increasing from day to day. "Oh but it was incredible folly in Emser," exclaimed Melancthon, "to venture upon measuring himself with our Hercules, and not to own that the finger of God was to be seen in what Luther was doing,⁴ as the king of the Egyptians refused to acknowledge it in what was done by Moses." The mild Melancthon found he could speak powerfully when he wanted

¹ Es mischte noch gar die Kirche und Capelle um der Menge willen ein fallen. (Spalatin in Seckend. p. 295.)

² Mehr als 30 Briefe von Fürsten . . . (Spalatin in Seckend. p. 295.)

³ Videre enim hominem voluerunt. (L. Epp. i. p. 544. 16th January, 1521.)

⁴ Dei digitum esse, quæ a Martino fiunt. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 282.)

to stimulate those who seemed to him to retrograde or remain stationary. "Luther has stood up for the truth," he wrote to John Hesse, "and yet you hold your peace! . . . He still lives, he still prospers, although Leo chafes with indignation. Bear in mind that it is impossible that Roman impiety should ever give its approval to the gospel.¹ How should this unhappy age be without its Judases, its Caiaphases, its Pilates, its Herods? Arm thyself then with the mighty power of the Word of God against such adversaries."

More than this: sarcastic satires directed against the chief ultra-montanists, circulated through all the provinces of the empire. Ulrich of Hutten was indefatigable. He wrote to Luther, to the legates, to the most considerable persons in Germany: "I tell you again and again, O Marians," said he to the legate Carracioli in one of his publications, "the darkness where-with you blinded our eyes is dissipated, the gospel is preached, the truth is told us, the silly absurdities of Rome are consigned to contempt, your ordinances languish and expire, there is hope of liberty."²

Not content with prose, Hutten had recourse likewise to verse, and published his *Shout at the Lutheran Conflagration*.³ Appealing to Jesus Christ, he conjured him to consume with the flame of his looks those who dared to disown his power. But Hutten did not want to confine himself to mere words,—he burned with impatience to introduce his sword into the conflict. Luther opposed his insensate projects: "I have no wish," said he, "that people should contend for the gospel by violence and by blood. I have written thus to Hutten."⁴

¹ Non posse Evangelium Romanæ impietati probari (Ibid. 280.)

² Ablata illa est a vobis inducta olim nostris oculis caligo, prædicatur Evangelium spes est libertatis (Ulrich ab Hutten Eques Mar. Carrac. L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 176.)

³ Quo tu oculos, pie Christe, tuos, frontisque severæ
Tende supercilium, teque esse ostende neganti.
Qui te contemnunt igitur, mediumque tonanti
Ostendunt digitum, tandem iis te ostende potentem.
Te videat ferus ille Leo, te tota malorum
Sentiat inluyies, scelerataque Roma tremiscat,
Ultorem scelerum discant te vivere saltem,
Qui regnare negant

(In incendium Lutheranum Exclamatio Ulrichi Hutteni Equitis, Ibid.)

⁴ Nollem vi et cæde pro Evangelio certari; ita scripsi ad hominem. (L. Epp. i. p. 543.)

The celebrated painter, Luke Cranach, published under the title, *The Passion of Christ and of Antichrist*, certain engravings, representing on the one side the glory and magnificence of the pope, and on the other, the humiliation and the sufferings of the Redeemer. Luther composed the inscriptions. These engravings produced an unprecedented effect. People withdrew from a church which at every point seemed so opposed to the spirit of its founder.¹ "That is an excellent work for the laity,"² said Luther.

Many persons in assailing the popedom employed arms that had little connection with the sanctity of the Christian life. Emser had replied to Luther's work entitled, *To the Leipsick he-goat*, by a publication under the title, *To the bull of Wittemberg*; the name was not ill chosen. But at Magdeburg, Emser's book was suspended from the gallows, with this inscription: "This book is worthy of the place," and a rod was put beside it, to intimate the punishment the author deserved.³ At Dœblin there was written under the pope's bull, in contempt of the impotence of its fulminations: "The nest is here; but the birds are flown."⁴

At Wittemberg, the students, taking advantage of the carnival days, decked out one of their number in a costume like that of the pope, and paraded him through the town with much pomp, but somewhat too ludicrously, said Luther.⁵ On arriving at the great market place, they proceeded towards the river, where some of them, making a sudden mock attack, seemed bent on throwing him in. But the pontiff, by no means relishing such a bath, took to flight; his cardinals, bishops, and familiars did the same, dispersing themselves in every direction, and followed through the streets by the students, so that there was hardly

¹ No wonder! What indeed is more striking than the disconformity with Christ of his pretended vicar? what more repugnant to the first principles of the kingdom of Christ, and the injunctions he gave to his disciples? We have only to contemplate the dress, the court-holding, the pomp and state of the pope and his cardinals and bishops, to make us acknowledge the Church, over which they rule, as a degenerate church, which has wandered far from Christ, and to be on our guard against its seductions.—L. R.

² Bonus et pro laicis liber. (L. Epp. i. p. 571.)

³ In publico infamiae loco affixus. (Ibid. p. 560.)

⁴ Das Nest ist hier, die Vögel sind ausgeflogen. (Ibid. p. 570.)

⁵ Nimis ludere Papam perscnatam circumvenerunt sublimem et pompaticum
• • • • (Ibid. p. 561.)

a corner of Wittenberg in which some Roman dignitary had not sought shelter, amid the shouts and laughter of an uproarious population.¹ "The enemy of Christ," said Luther, "who makes a sport of kings and of Christ himself, well deserves being thus made sport of." Here we think him wrong; for truth is too fair to be made to descend into the mud, and when she contends, it ought to be without the aid of satirical songs, caricatures, and scenes of carnival absurdity. Possibly without those popular demonstrations her successes may be less apparent; but they will be more pure and consequently more lasting.

Nevertheless, all was not the intoxication of triumph of the Reformer's part. Behind the car in which his fellow-citizens drew him along in the excitement and transport of their admiration, there was not wanting the slave whose office it was to remind him of his wretchedness. Some of his friends seemed disposed to retrace their steps. Staupitz, whom he used to call his father, seemed shaken in his views. The pope had accused him, and Staupitz had declared his readiness to submit to the judgment of his holiness. "I am afraid," said Luther to him, "that in accepting the pope as judge, you may appear to desert both me and the doctrines I have maintained. If Christ love you, he will constrain you to withdraw your letter. Christ is condemned, despoiled, blasphemed; this is not the time for timidity but for speaking boldly out.² Therefore is it that while you are exhorting me to be humble, I exhort you to be proud; for while you have too much humility I have too much pride. I shall be called haughty, avaricious, adulterous, homicidal, anti-papal, a man guilty of every crime It matters not! provided they cannot accuse me of maintaining an impious silence at the moment that the Lord was saying with sorrow, 'I look on my right hand, and no man knoweth me, (Ps. cxlii.) The word of Jesus Christ is a word, not of peace, but of the sword. If you do not wish to follow Jesus Christ,

¹ Fugitivum cum cardinalibus, Episcopis, famulusque suis, in diversas partes oppidi disperserunt et insecuti sunt (L. Epp. i. 17th February, 1521.)

² Non enim hic tempus timendi sed clamandi (Ibid. p. 557.)

I will march alone, I will advance alone, and will storm the place."¹

Thus did Luther, like a commander-in-chief, cast his eye over the whole field of battle; and while his voice urged new soldiers into the fight, he discovered among his troops such as appeared feeble, and called them back to their duty. Everywhere his exhortations might be heard. His letters followed each other in rapid succession. Three printing presses were incessantly occupied in printing his works.² His words ran from mouth to mouth among the people, fortifying alarmed consciences in the confessionals, upholding in the monasteries souls that were ready to give way, and maintaining the rights of truth in the palaces of princes.

"Amid the storms that assail me," he wrote to the elector, "I have ever hoped that I should one day find peace. But I now see that that was a mere human imagination. From day to day the flood rises, and already the ocean, with all its billows, surrounds me. The tempest rages with frightful violence.³ With one hand I hold the sword and with the other I build the walls of Sion."⁴ His former ties are now loosed: the hand that had launched the thunderbolts of excommunication at him, has now broken these. "Excommunicated by the bull," says he, "I am set free from the authority of the pope and from monastic laws, and I joyfully embrace this deliverance. But I relinquish neither the dress of the order nor the monastery."⁵ And yet, amid all this turmoil, he did not lose sight of the dangers to which his soul was exposed in the struggle, but felt how necessary it was to watch over himself. "Thou dost well to pray for me," he wrote to Pellican, who resided at Basel. "I cannot sufficiently devote myself to holy exercises; life to me is a cross.

¹ Quod si tu vis sequi, sine me ire et rapi (L. Epp. i. p. 558.)

² Cum tria prela solus ego occupare cogar. (Ibid. p. 558.)

³ Videns rem tumultuosissimo tumultu tumultuantem. (Ibid. p. 546.) Literally therefore, "seeing the thing tumultuating with a most tumultuous tumult." Tr.

⁴ Una manu gladium apprehendens et altera murum ædificaturus. (Ibid. p. 565.) There is an evident allusion to Nehemiah iv. 17. Tr.

⁵ Ab ordinis et Papæ legibus solutus . . . quod gaudeo et amplector. (Ibid. p. 568.)

Thou dost well to exhort me to be modest; I feel how much I need to be so; but I am not master of myself; I know not what spirit hurries me along; I am not conscious of wishing evil to any one.¹ But my enemies press upon me so furiously that I am not sufficiently on my guard against Satan's seductions. Pray then for me." . . .

Thus did Luther and the Reformation hasten to fulfil the design towards which God was calling them. The unsettlement of men's minds passed from one to another, so that those even who seemed likely to prove most faithful to the hierarchy began to bestir themselves. "Even those," said Eck ingenuously enough, "who hold from the pope the best benefices and the richest canonries, remain as still as fishes. Many of them even cry up Luther as a man replenished with the Spirit of God, and call the pope's defenders sophists and flatterers."² The Church, vigorous as it still appeared, sustained as it was by this world's treasures, and governments, and armies, yet being really emaciated and enfeebled, without love to God, without Christian life, without zealous affection for the truth, found itself in the presence of simple, but courageous men—men who, knowing that God is with those who contend for the truth, had no doubt of victory. We have seen how mighty at all times is the power of an idea in penetrating into the masses of mankind, rousing their inmost feelings, and, should the occasion require, hurrying thousands upon thousands into the battle-field and to death. But if a merely human idea is endued with so much force, what may not be expected when the idea has come from heaven and when God himself opens men's hearts to receive it. The world has not often seen such a power in operation: still, it did see it in the early days of Christianity and in those of the Reformation, and it will see it likewise in days that are yet to come. Men who despised this world's wealth and grandeur, who were content to live a life of hardship and poverty, were beginning to bestir themselves in the holiest of causes;—the doctrine of faith,

¹ . . . Compos mei non sum, rapior nescio quo spiritu, cum nemin' me male velle conscius sim . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 555.)

² Reynaldi Epist. J. Eckii ad Cardinal. Contarinum

--the doctrine of grace. All the religious elements began to ferment in society while thus unsettled; and the fire of enthusiasm urged many souls boldly to launch forth into this new life, this epoch of renovation, which now began to open out so magnificently, and into which Providence was precipitating the nations.

BOOK SEVENTH.

THE DIET OF WORMS.

1521. (January—May.)

ORIGINATING in the mental conflicts of one humble soul in a cell of a monastery at Erfurt, the Reformation had gone on in a course of perpetual enlargement. An obscure person, with the Word of life in his hands, had stood up in the presence of the great things of this world, and they had reeled and staggered at the sight. That Word he had opposed, first, to Tetzel and his numerous array, and the greedy salesman, after a brief struggle, had taken to flight: next, to the Roman legate at Augsburg, and the disconcerted legate had suffered his prey to escape. somewhat later, to the champions of literature in the halls of Leipsick, and the theologians had seen with amazement the weapons of the syllogism fall to pieces in their hands; finally, he had with this Word confronted the pope; the pontiff starting from his slumbers, had stood up from his throne, and would have blasted this troublesome monk with his thunderbolts, but that Word paralyzed all the might of the chief of Christendom. There yet remained another conflict for it to sustain. It had still to triumph over the emperor of the West—over the kings and princes of the earth; and then victorious over all this world's grandeurs, to establish itself in the Church, and reign there as the very Word of God.

A solemn diet was about to be opened: being the first general meeting of the empire at which the young Charles was to preside. Nuremberg, where, in virtue of the golden bull, it was to have been held, being desolated by the plague, it was summoned

to meet at Worms, on the 6th of January, 1521.¹ Never had so many princes been known to attend the diet, all fain to appear at this first act of the youthful emperor's government, all pleased to have an opportunity of showing off their power. The young landgrave, Philip of Hesse, among others, he who was afterwards to act so important a part in the Reformation, arrived at Worms in the middle of January with six hundred knights, including some who had become famous for their gallantry.

A more powerful motive than this, however, had induced the electors, the dukes, the archbishops, the landgraves, the margraves, the counts, the bishops, the barons, and the lords of the empire, as well as the deputies from the cities, and the ambassadors of the various kings of Christendom, on this particular occasion, to cover the roads leading to Worms with their brilliant trains of attendants. It had been given out that the diet was to be occupied with the nomination of a council of regency, to govern the empire during Charles's frequent absence, with the subject of the jurisdiction of the imperial chamber, and other weighty questions; but public attention was chiefly directed to another matter, mentioned likewise in the emperor's letters calling the diet; this was the Reformation. The cause of the monk of Wittemberg threw the great interests of the political world into the shade, and formed the grand topic of conversation among the noble personages who were pouring into Worms.

Every thing portended that the diet would be difficult to manage and of a stormy character.^{2 3} Charles, still very young, had

¹ Sleidan, tom. i. p. 80.

² Es gieng aber auf diesem Reichstag gar schlüpferig zu. . . (Seckend. p. 326.)

³ The anomalous constitution and heterogeneous materials of this deliberative assembly, might well make it difficult to manage, under almost any circumstances. The emperor, who from his magnificent titles, to which Charles V. had added "Majesty," (see Dr. Robertson,) might have been supposed absolute monarch of Germany, possessed less real power than even the president of the United States of America over that confederation, and the authorities by which the imperial power was limited and controlled, were extremely diverse. Some were ecclesiastical, some secular; some were of the nature of absolute monarchies, others aristocratical, others democratical, and all these had been stimulated into activity by the revival of learning, the invention of printing, the recent institution of new universities and academies, the importance to which trade, manufactures, and the arts had grown, and, finally, by religious discussions. There was nothing singular in the pact or agreement which Charles had been made to subscribe at his election, it having been the custom of the princes to require some such guarantee from their emperors, but Charles's immense hereditary possessions made it peculiarly requisite in his case. TR.

not yet adopted any precise political system; the able and active Chièvres, his governor and prime minister, died at Worms: persons pursuing different objects of ambition appeared upon the scene, many opposing passions met and thwarted each other; Spaniards and Belgians emulously sought to insinuate themselves into the councils of the young prince, the nuncios multiplied their intrigues, the German princes spoke boldly out. A struggle might be foreseen, the results of which would mainly depend on the secret proceedings of the various parties.

How was Charles to act, placed as he was between the pope's nuncio and the elector to whom he was indebted for his crown? How was he to avoid dissatisfying either Alcander or Frederick. The one solicited the emperor to execute the bull of the pope, while the other besought him to undertake nothing against the monk until he had first heard him. Wishing to satisfy both these parties, the young prince, while residing at Oppenheim, had written to the elector, desiring him to bring Luther to the diet; assuring him at the same time, that no injustice should be committed with regard to him, that no violence should be done to him, and that learned men would confer with him there.

This letter from Charles, accompanied with letters from Chièvres, and the count of Nassau, threw the elector into great perplexity. At any moment, the pope's alliance might become necessary to the emperor,¹ and then it was all over with Luther. Were Frederick to take the Reformer to Worms, it might possibly be merely to conduct him to the scaffold. Yet Charles's orders were precise. The elector appointed Spalatin to communicate the letters he had received to Luther. "The adversar-

¹ In addition to other reasons for courting the pope's friendship, Charles appears to have required it in helping him to tax the Spanish clergy. Speaking of the year 1519, Dr. Robertson says: "The pope having granted the king the tenths of all ecclesiastical benefices in Castile, to assist him in carrying on war with greater vigour against the Turks, a convocation of the clergy unanimously refused to levy that sum, upon pretence that it ought never to be exacted but at those times when Christendom was actually invaded by the infidels; and though Leo, in order to support his authority, laid the kingdom under an interdict, so little regard was paid to a censure which was universally deemed unjust, that Charles himself applied to have it taken off." This fact proves further, that mere resistance to the pope was by no means thought so heinous an offence in the catholic world, and, as was remarked in a former Note, that the advocacy of the grand doctrines of the Gospel was what mainly brought upon Luther so many enemies, and so much bitter hostility. TR.

ies," said the chaplain to him, "are doing all in their power to mature this affair."¹

Luther's friends trembled, but himself did not. His health was very indifferent at the time, but it mattered not! "If I cannot go to Worms in good health," he replied to the elector, "I will make myself be carried thither as an invalid. For if the emperor call me, I doubt not that it is a call from God. If they have any thoughts of having recourse to violence against me, as is very likely, (for assuredly it is not for the purpose of gaining information that they would have me appear,) I commit the affair into the Lord's hands. He still lives and reigns, he who preserved the three young men in the burning fiery furnace. If he does not wish to save me, my life is but a small matter. Let us only do what we can to prevent the Gospel from being exposed to the railings of the ungodly, and let us shed our blood for it, lest they should triumph. Shall it be by living or dying that I shall best serve the salvation of all? This it is not for us to decide. Only let us pray to God that our young emperor may not begin his reign by staining his hands with my blood. I would rather that I should perish by the sword of the Romans. You know with what chastisements the emperor Sigismond was smitten after the murder of John Huss. You may expect everything from me . . . except flight and retractation.² Flee I cannot, and still less can I retract."³

Previous to his receiving this letter from Luther, the elector had resolved what to do. In proportion as he advanced in his knowledge of the Gospel, he became more decided in the course he pursued. He saw that the proposed conference at Worms, could lead to no good result. "It seems hard for me to take Luther to Worms with me," he wrote to Charles V.; "relieve me of that difficulty. As for the rest, I have never wished to take his doctrines under my protection, but only to prevent his

¹ *Adversarios omnia moliri ad maturandum id negotii.* (L. Epp. i. p. 536.)

² *Omnia de me præsumas præter fugam et palinodiam.* (L. Epp. i. p. 534.)

³ What impartial person can fail to recognise in this the language of sincerity at least? Beyond this people may differ from him in their views of the cause which he considered himself bound to maintain; it may be thought that he was mistaken; but to accuse him of low ends, or perverse purposes, is either blind prejudice or deliberate calumny. Who but the man who is conscious of his sincerity durst thus venture to commit himself to confidence in God? Who in doing so, would thus keep the interests of others in view? Who hold out at once so stedfastly and with so much composure?—L. R.

being condemned unheard. The legates, without waiting for your orders, have allowed themselves to be hurried into a course dishonourable both for Luther and for me, and I much fear that they have thus led Luther to commit an imprudent act, which would expose him to imminent danger were he to appear at the Diet." The elector here alludes to the burning of the pope's bull at a bonfire.

But already had the news of Luther's arrival spread through Worms, to the delight of the lovers of novelty, and to the alarm of the emperor's court, but to no one's indignation so much as that of the pope's legate. Aleander had had opportunities along the road of seeing how far the Gospel, as announced by Luther, had found a response in all classes of society. Men of letters, advocates, nobles, the lower orders of the clergy, the various orders of monks, and the people, had been gained over to the Reformation.¹ These friends of the new doctrine carried their heads high, and spoke out what they thought in bold language, whereas the partisans of Rome were chilled by a terror which they could not overcome. The popedom still maintained its place but its supports were tottering; their ears could discern a noise that portended ruin, a noise like the hollow crackling that precedes a convulsion among the mountains.² In the course of his journey to Worms, Aleander was often beside himself. Had he occasion to stop for refreshment, or to have a night's rest, neither men of learning, nor the nobility, nor the priests, not even such as ranked among the pope's supposed friends, dared to receive him; and the haughty nuncio was obliged to seek for quarters among inns of the lowest class.³ This so frightened him that he had no doubt of his life being in constant jeopardy. Thus he arrived at Worms with the feeling of resentment for personal insults added to the fanaticism he had brought from Rome, and forthwith set everything agoing to prevent the much dreaded Luther from having the audacity to make his appearance. "Would it not be scandalous" said he, "to see laymen sub-

¹ Multitudo. . . turba pauperum nobilium. . . grammatici, causidici, . . . inferiores ecclesiastici. . . factio multorum regularium. . . (Pallavicini, i. p. 93.)

² Hæ omnes conditiones petulanter grassantium. . . metum cuilibet incutiebant. (Ibid.)

³ Neminem nactus qui auderet ipsum excipere, ad vilia sordidaque hospitia ægre divertit. (Ibid.)

ject to a fresh examination, a case which the pope has already condemned?" Nothing so formidable to a Roman courtier as a sifting scrutiny: and this, moreover, to be conducted, not at Rome but in Germany: what a humiliation! even were Luther to be unanimously condemned—a result in no wise certain. Might not Luther's potent eloquence, after having already proved so mischievous, sweep many of the lords and princes into inevitable ruin? Aleander was urgent with Charles; he supplicated; he threatened; he spoke with the authority of a nuncio from the head of the Church.¹ Charles gave in, and wrote to the elector, that the term granted to Luther having expired, that monk now lay under the pope's excommunication, so that, if still unwilling to retract what he had written, Frederick ought to leave him at Wittemberg. But the prince had already left Saxony without Luther. "I beseech the Lord to be favourable to our elector," were Melancthon's words at his departure. "On him hang all our hopes for the restoration of Christendom. His enemies dare any thing *και πάντα λίθον κινησόμενους*;² but God will disappoint the council of Ahitophel. For our part, let us keep up the conflict with the instructions we give, and with our prayers." Luther was much distressed at not having been allowed to appear at Worms.³

But for Aleander it was not enough that Luther should not come to Worms; he wanted him to be condemned there. He returned incessantly to the charge before the princes, prelates, and various other members of the diet; accusing the Augustinian friar, not only of disobedience and heresy, but further, of sedition, rebellion, impiety, and blasphemy. But the very tone of his voice revealed the passions that influenced him. "It is hatred and thirst for revenge that are now exciting him," it was said, "more than zeal and piety;"⁴ and with all the frequency, and all the vehemence of his appeals, he gained none to his side.⁵

¹ Legati Romani nolunt ut audiat homo hæreticus. Minantur multa. (Zw. Epp. p. 157.)

² They leave no stone unturned. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 279. 24th January.)

³ Cum dolore legi novissimas Caroli litteras. (L. Epp. i. p. 542.)

⁴ Magis invidia et vindictæ libidine quam zelo pietatis. (Historia Johannis Cochleæ, de actis et scriptis Martini Lutheri. Parisiis, 1565. p. 27. verso. Cochleus was all his life one of Luther's greatest enemies. (We shall soon see him appear upon the scene.)

⁵ Vehementibus suis orationibus parum promovit. (Ibid.)

Some remarked to him that the pope's bull condemned Luther only conditionally; others did not quite conceal their gratification at the humbling of Roman pride. The ministers of the emperor, on the one hand, and the ecclesiastical electors, on the other, affected great coldness; the former, in order that the pope might have still more pressing reasons for allying himself with their master; the latter, for the purpose of enhancing the return they expected for favouring the pope. On the whole, the feeling that Luther was innocent predominated at the meeting; and Aleander could not restrain his indignation.

But if the legate felt impatient at the apathy displayed by the diet, still more was he annoyed at that of Rome, which had found it so difficult to pay any serious attention to the quarrel of "the drunken German," supposed it impossible that a bull from the sovereign pontiff could fail to make him humble and submissive. She had relapsed into all her former neglectful security,¹ and sent no more bulls or purses. But how was such a piece of business to be done without money? ² Rome, therefore, needed to be aroused, and with this view Aleander sounded the alarm. "Germany is moving off from Rome," he wrote to the cardinal de Medicis; "the princes are revolting from the pope. . . . A few more delays, a few further concessions, and hope is gone. Money! Money! or Germany is lost."³

Rome roused herself at the cry; the ministers of the pope-dom, recovering from their torpor, proceeded with all haste to forge their dreadful thunderbolts at the Vatican. The pope sent forth a new bull,⁴ and the excommunication wherewith the heretical doctor had hitherto been menaced only, was now decisively pronounced against him and all his adherents. While she thus cut the last thread that still connected him with her church, Rome extended Luther's liberty, and by so doing, augmented his power. Smitten by the thunderbolts of the pope, he fled for refuge to Jesus Christ with a fresh affection. Cast out from the outer temple, he had the fuller consciousness of being himself a temple in which God dwelt.

¹ Negligens quædam securitas Romam pervaserat. (Pallavicini, i. p. 94.)

² Nec pecunia ad varios pro eadem sumptus. (Ibid.)

³ Periculum denique amittendæ Germaniæ ex parsimonia monetæ ejusdam. (Pallavicini, i. p. 94.)

⁴ Decet romanum Pontificem, &c. (Roman. Bullarium.)

"It is most glorious," he would say, "that we sinners, in believing in Jesus Christ, and in eating his flesh, have him in us, with all his power and might, his wisdom and his righteousness, according as it is written: *He that believeth in me, in him do I dwell.* Admirable dwelling! marvellous tabernacle! far superior to that of Moses, and all ornamented within in a magnificent manner with superb carpets, purple hangings and golden furniture, whilst outwardly, as on the tabernacle that God commanded to be constructed in the desert of Sinai, there is nought to be seen but the rugged aspect of ram's skins and goat skins.¹ Christians often stumble, and to look at them externally, they seem but shame and weakness. But it matters not! within this weakness and this foolishness there secretly resides a might which this world cannot know, and which yet overcomes this world; for Christ dwells in them. I have sometimes seen Christians who advanced halting and in much weakness, but when the time had arrived for their entering into the conflict, or for their appearing at the bar of the world, Christ suddenly wrought in them, and they became so strong and so resolute, that the devil was frightened and fled."^{2 3}

Such a time was fast coming upon Luther, and Christ, in whose communion he remained, was not to prove wanting to him. Rome meanwhile violently rejected him. The Reformer and all his partisans were cursed, whatever might be their rank or their authority, and together with their descendants were dispossessed of all their honours and possessions. Every faithful Christian that valued his soul's salvation, was bound to fly at the sight of this accursed crew. Wherever heresy had found admission, the priests were bound on all sundays and holidays, just as the people had filled the churches, solemnly to publish the excommunication. The vases and ornaments were to be taken from the altars; the crucifix was to be laid upon the

¹ Exodus xxvi. 7, 14.

² So regete sich der Christus, dass sie so fest wurden, dass der Teufel fliehen musste. (L. Oppt. ix. p. 613. on John vi. 56.)

³ The doctrine which Luther advocated was thus his peculiar strength. CHRIST was his all. He was his righteousness before God and the hope also on which he built. He was likewise his strength before men, through whom and independence on whom he effected such great things. It was faith that engaged him to Christ. It was the indwelling of CHRIST in his inmost heart that communicated that strength to him.—L. R.

ground; twelve priests with torches in their hands, were to light these and then to dash them to the ground and extinguish them by trampling them under foot; after which the bishop was to publish the condemnation of these impious persons; all the church bells were to be tolled; the bishops and the priests were to utter their anathemas and maledictions, and sermons were to be boldly preached against Luther and his adherents.¹

Twenty-two days had elapsed since the excommunication was published at Rome, and as yet it may have been unknown in Germany, when Luther, learning that people talked anew of summoning him to Worms, wrote to the Elector, and drew up what he had to say in such a manner that it might be shown to the Diet. His object was to correct the false impressions entertained by the princes, and frankly to explain to that august tribunal the true nature of a case that was so little understood "I most heartily rejoice, most serene elector," said he, "that his imperial majesty means to take cognisance of this affair. I call Jesus Christ to witness, that it is the cause of the German nation, of the Catholic Church, of the Christian world, of God himself . . . not of a mere man, least of all of a man like me.² I am ready to appear at Worms provided a safe conduct be given me, as also learned, pious, and impartial judges. I am ready to answer for myself . . . for I was not actuated by any rash spirit, nor was it for the sake of any profit to be derived from it, that I taught the doctrine with which I am now reproached: but because I had to comply with the commands of my conscience and with my oath as doctor of holy Scripture; it was for the glory of God, for the salvation of the Christian Church, for the benefit of the German nation, for the rooting out of so many superstitions, abuses, evils, scandals, tyranny, blasphemies and impieties."

This declaration, put forth at what was so solemn a moment for Luther, deserves our special attention. Here we behold

¹ Here we may see what Rome is; how it endeavours to rule solely by fear. What other purpose was all this din to serve, but to fill the superstitious multitude with unreasonable terror, and thereby to overcome Luther? How far removed is this from the example of Jesus and his apostles, and from that manner of defending the truth which can convince a reasonable man.—L. R.

² *Causam quæ Christo teste, Dei, christiani orbis, ecclesie catholice, et totius germanicæ nationis, et non unius et privati est hominis . . .* (L. Ppp. i. p. 551.)

what were the motives that influenced his conduct and the deep-seated springs that effected the renovation of Christian society. These were very different from either the jealousy of a monk or the desire of being married,

II. But all this had no weight with politicians. The papal alliance was daily becoming more necessary to Charles's projects. He could have wished either to detach Frederick from Luther, or to content the pope without wounding Frederick's feelings. Many of the persons about him displayed in this affair of the Augustinian friar, that contemptuous coldness which is commonly affected by political men when religion is in question. "Let us cast off the extreme parties," said they. "Let us entangle Luther in negotiations, and induce him to hold his peace by making some concessions to him. The true course to pursue is to stifle, not to inflame. If the monk take the bait, we shall win the day. By accepting a compromise, he will have interdicted and ruined himself. To keep up appearances, some outward reforms must be decreed; the elector will be satisfied; the pope will be gained over; and all things will return to their wonted course."

Such was the plan suggested by the emperor's intimate advisers; and it was a new policy which appears to have been guessed at by the Wittenberg doctors. "They are secretly endeavouring to gain people over," said Melancthon, "and are now working under ground."¹ Charles V.'s confessor, John Glapio, a man held in some consideration, able as a courtier, and as a monk, full of finesse, engaged to carry the plan into effect. Glapio had Charles's entire confidence, and that prince, acting in this respect in conformity with Spanish customs, committed almost absolutely to him all affairs that bore upon religion. No sooner had Charles been declared Emperor, than Leo X. eagerly sought to gain Glapio by favours to which the confessor had shown himself extremely sensible,² and as he could in no way return the Pontiff's favours better than by silencing heresy, he straightway set to work.³

Among the elector's privy councillors, we find Chancellor

¹ *Clanculum tentent et experiantur . . .* (Corp. Reform. i. p. 281, 3d Feb.)

² *Benignis officiis recens a Pontifice delinitus.* (Pallavicini, i. p. 90.)

³ *Et sane in eo toto negotio singulare probitatis ardorisque specimen dedit.* (Ibid.)

Gregory Bruck, or Pontanus, a man remarkably distinguished by his intelligence, decision, and courage; one who knew more of theology than all the doctors, and whose wisdom and shrewdness enabled him to make head against the crafty monks at the court of Charles V. Aware of the chancellor's influence, Glapio sought an interview with him, and going up to him as if he had been a friend of Luther's, "I was delighted," said he, to him with an expression beaming with kindness, "when on reading Luther's earlier publications, I perceived that he was a vigorous stem that had shot forth beautiful branches, and promised the Church the most precious fruits. Many before him, it is true, had owned the same things, nevertheless none but he has had the noble courage fearlessly to publish the truth. But on my reading his book on the *Babylonish Captivity*, I seemed to be broken upon the wheel, and to be beaten from head to foot. I do not believe," added the monk, "that friar Martin can own being the author of it; I look in vain in it, for either his style or his learning." After some discussion the confessor went on to say, "Pray, introduce me to the elector, and I shall then, in your presence, explain to him what are Luther's errors." The chancellor replied, that engagements connected with the Diet left his Highness no leisure, and that, besides, it was a piece of business with which he did not intermeddle. The monk was annoyed to find that he had failed to carry his point. "As for the rest," said the chancellor to him, "since you yourself say that there is no wrong without a remedy, pray explain your meaning." Upon this, assuming a confidential look, the confessor replied: "The emperor ardently desires seeing a monk like Luther reconciled to the Church, for his books (previous to the publication of his treatise on the *Babylonish Captivity*) have not a little pleased his Majesty.¹ . . . The angry feelings with which the bull had inspired Luther, were doubtless what alone dictated that last publication of his. Let him declare that he never intended to disturb the repose of the Church, and learned men of all nations will range themselves on his side. . . . Do procure for me an audience from his highness."

The chancellor straightway waited on his master to relate

¹ Es haben dessen Bücher Ihre Majestät . . . um etwas gefallen
(Weimar Archives, Seckend. p. 315.)

what had passed. "Tell the confessor," he replied, "that I cannot condescend to his request, and do you continue the conference."

This message was received by Glapio with great demonstrations of respect; and changing his tactics, he said: "Let the elector appoint some confidential persons to deliberate on this affair."

THE CHANCELLOR. "The elector does not put himself forward in defence of Luther's cause."

THE CONFESSOR. "Very well! do you at least treat with me on the subject. Jesus Christ is my witness that I am doing all this from my affection for the Church, and for Luther, who has opened so many hearts to the truth."¹

The chancellor having refused to charge himself with a task which was that of the Reformer, seemed disposed to retire.

"Don't go away," said the monk.

THE CHANCELLOR. "What then is to be done?"

THE CONFESSOR. "Let Luther disown the authorship of the Babylonish Captivity."

THE CHANCELLOR. "But the pope's bull condemns all his other writings."

THE CONFESSOR. "That is because of his obstinacy. If he retract his book, the pope, in virtue of his omnipotence, can easily restore him to a state of grace. What hopes may we not entertain, now that we have so excellent an emperor!" . . .

Perceiving that these words were producing some effect upon the chancellor, the monk hastened to add: "Luther would always argue according to the Bible. The Bible—it is like wax which can be drawn out and moulded at pleasure. I make bold to say, that I could find in the Bible even stranger opinions still than any broached by Luther. He is mistaken when he would give the force of commands to all the words of Jesus Christ" "Next," wishing to address himself to the fears of the person with whom he conversed, he added: "What would be the issue were the emperor to-day, or to-morrow, to commence hostilities? . . . Think but of that." Upon this he allowed Pontanus to retire.

The confessor was contriving new snares. "You might live

Der andern das Hertz zu vielem Gutem eröffnet . . . (Seckend. p. 315.)

ten years with him," said Erasmus, "and yet be unable to comprehend him after all."

"What an excellent book is that on the Christian's liberty!" said he to the chancellor, on seeing him some days after; "what wisdom! what talent! what wit! It is just as a truly learned man should write. . . . Let men of irreproachable character be selected on both sides, and then let the Pope and Luther refer the case to their award. There can be no doubt that it will be in Luther's favour on several points.¹ I have told the emperor that God would punish him as well as all other princes, if the Church, which is the spouse of Christ, be not cleansed from all the stains that defile her. I added that God himself had raised up Luther, and had commanded him to reprove men sharply, making use of him as a rod for the correction of the sins of the world."²

On hearing these words, which were a mere repetition of the impressions of the time, and showed what opinion was then entertained respecting Luther even among his adversaries, the chancellor felt prompted to express his astonishment at no more respect being shown to his master. "Deliberations are daily held in the emperor's presence," said he, "and to these the elector is not even invited. It seems strange to him that the emperor, who owes him some gratitude, should exclude him from his councils."

THE CONFESSOR. "At these deliberations I have been present only once, and have heard the emperor resist the solicitations of the nuncios. Five years hence it will be seen what Charles V. has done for the reformation of the Church."

"The elector," replied Pontanus, "is not aware what Luther's intentions are. Let him be sent for, and allowed a hearing."

To this the Confessor replied by heaving a deep drawn sigh.³ "I call God to witness," said he, "how ardently I desire to see the reform of Christendom effected."

All that Glapio really proposed to himself was to make the

¹ Es sey nicht zu zweifeln dass Lutherus in vielen Artickeln werde den Sieg davon tragen. (Seckend. p. 319.)

² Dass Gott diesen Man gesandt . . . dass er eine Geisse seye um der Sünden willen. (Weymar. Ardin.—Seckend. p. 320.)

³ Glapio that hierauf einen tiefen Seufzer, und rufte Gott zum Zeugen . . . (Seckend. p. 321.)

affair drag on to a tedious length, and meanwhile to close Luther's mouth. At all events, Luther was not to come to Worms. A ghost from the other world, making its appearance in the midst of the assembled Diet, would not have terrified the nuncios, the monks, and the whole papal army, more than would the sight of the Wittemberg doctor there.

"How long does it take to come from Wittemberg to Worms?" inquired the monk of the chancellor, at the same time affecting an air of indifference; after which he begged Pontanus to present his most humble greetings to the elector, and left him.

Such were the manœuvres of the courtiers. They were disconcerted by the firmness of Pontanus. In all the negotiations that followed, that person showed himself firm as a rock. As for the rest, the Roman monks fell themselves into the snares which they had laid for their opponents. "The Christian," said Luther in his figurative language, "is like the bird that people attach to a trap. The wolves and foxes prowl about it, and pounce on it, thinking to devour it, instead of which, they fall into the pit and perish, while the timid bird survives. Thus do the holy angels keep watch over us, while those devouring wolves, hypocrites and persecutors, can do us no harm."¹ Not only did the confessor's artifices fail of success, but they even strengthened Frederick's impression that Luther was in the right, and that it was his duty to defend him.

Men's hearts were now inclining ever more and more towards the Gospel. A prior of the Dominicans proposed that the emperor, the kings of France, of Spain, of England, of Portugal, of Hungary, of Poland, together with the pope and the electors, should appoint representatives to whom it should be left to bring the matter to a decision. "Never," said he, "did any one trust to the pope alone."² In short, the general feeling became such, that it seemed impossible to condemn Luther without his being first heard and convicted.³

Aleander became alarmed at this, and he now displayed an energy that he had never shown before. He saw that it was no

¹ L. Opp (W.) xxii. 1655.

² Und niemals dem Pöpst allein geglaubt. (Seckend. p. 323.)

³ Spalatinus scribit tantum favoris evangelio esse istic. ut me inauditum et inconvictum damnari non speret. (L. Epp. i. p. 556, of the 9th of February.)

longer against Luther and the elector only that he had to make head. He saw with horror the secret negotiations of the confessor, the proposal made by the prior, the consent given by Charles's ministers, the extreme coldness of the Roman piety even among the pontiff's most devoted friends, which was such, says Pallavicini, "that one might suppose that a torrent of ice-cold water had passed over it."¹ He had at last received gold and silver from Rome: and held most energetic briefs addressed to the most powerful men in the empire.² Dreading that his prey might escape, he could perceive that the moment was come for striking a decisive blow. He presented his briefs; he distributed gold and silver with lavish hands; he added to this the most seductive promises; "and armed with this triple traffick," says the cardinal historian, "he strove to turn the wavering assembly of electors anew in favour of the pope."³ But it was the emperor chiefly whom he surrounded with his snares. He took advantage of the dissensions between the Belgians and the Spanish ministers. He beset the prince. All Rome's friends, aroused by his voice, were urgent with the youthful Charles "Every day," wrote the elector to his brother John, "deliberations are held against Luther; it is insisted that he shall be put to the ban by the pope and by the emperor; every effort is made to injure him. Those who make a parade of their red hats, the Romans, with all their sect, display indefatigable zeal in this business."⁴

In fact, Alexander urged the condemnation of the Reformer with a violence that Luther calls a marvellous fury.⁵ The apostate nuncio,⁶ as Luther calls him, hurried by passion beyond the bounds of prudence, himself one day exclaimed, "Should you pretend, O Germans, to throw off the yoke of Roman obedience, we will so contrive matters, that lifting an exterminating sword against one another, you shall all perish in your own blood."⁷ "See how the pope feeds Christ's sheep," adds the Reformer.

¹ Hinc aqua manabat, quæ succensæ pietatis æstum restinguebat. (Pallavicini, i. p. 96.)

² Mandata pecuniæ ac diplomata. (Ibid. p. 95.)

³ Triplici hac industriâ nunc Alexander. . . . (Ibid.)

⁴ Das thun die in rothen Hüten prangen. . . . (Seekend. 364.)

⁵ Miro furore papistæ moliantur mihi mala. . . . (L. Epp. i. p. 556.)

⁶ Nuntius apostaticus (a play on the word for *apostolicus*) agit summis viribus. (Ibid. p. 569.)

⁷ Ut mutuis cædibus absumpti, vestro cruore pereatis. (Ibid. p. 556.)

But it was not thus that he spoke himself. He asked no personal favour. "Luther is ready," said Melancthon, "to lay down his life in promoting the glory and advancement of the gospel."¹ Still he shuddered at the thought of the desolations of which his death might be the signal. He beheld a misguided people possibly revenging his martyrdom in the blood of his adversaries, and in particular, in that of the priests. He revolted at the thought of incurring such a responsibility. "God," he would say, "lays an arrest on the fury of his enemies; but should it burst forth . . . then will there a storm be seen to discharge itself on the priests like that which ravaged Bohemia. . . . I am clear of it, for I have pressingly besought the German nobility to lay an arrest on the Romans by wisdom, not by the sword."² To wage war with the priests—a people that have neither courage nor strength, is no better than fighting with women and children."

Charles Fifth yielded to the nuncio's solicitations. His Belgian and Spanish devotion had been nurtured and brought out by his preceptor Adrian, who afterwards occupied the pontifical throne. But the Diet had still to be gained over. "Convince that assembly," said the youthful monarch to the nuncio. It was all that Aleander desired; he was promised admission into the Diet on the 13th of February.

III. For this solemn audience the nuncio now prepared himself. The task was important, but Aleander was worthy of it, for not only as ambassador from the sovereign pontiff was he encircled with all the splendour of his office, but he was also one of the most eloquent men of his age. It was not without impatience that the friends of the Reformation looked forward to this meeting. The elector abstained from attending under the pretext that he was unwell; but he gave orders to some of his counsellors to go and to take note of what might be said by the nuncio.

When the appointed day had come, Aleander proceeded to the assembly of the princes, and such was the excitement called forth on the occasion, that many thought of Annas or Caiaphas going to the pretorium to demand the death of *the man who*

¹ Libenter etiam morte suâ evangelii gloriam et profectum emerit. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 285.)

² Non ferro sed consiliis et edictis. (L. Epp. i. p. 563.)

*seduced the nation.*¹ Just as the nuncio was at the point of passing the threshold, "the usher of the Diet," says Pallavicini, "going up to him with great warmth, struck him on the breast and pushed him back."² At heart he was a Lutheran," adds the Roman historian. If this account be true, it no doubt shows a strange outbreak of passion; but at the same time, it supplies the measure of that mighty power wherewith Luther's words had moved men's feelings, down to the very door-keepers of the council of the empire. The lofty Aleander, gathering himself up with an air of dignity, walked on and entered the hall. Never had Rome been called to make her apology before so august an assembly. The nuncio laid out before him the documents which he considered necessary in order to make out his case; these were Luther's books and the pope's bulls; the Diet then being called to order, he spoke as follows:—

"Most august emperor, most mighty princes, most excellent deputies, I appear in behalf of a cause, for which I feel the most vehement affection burning within me. The question is, whether my master is to keep on his head that tiara which all adore; whether that papal throne is to be maintained for which I am ready to give up my body to the flames, provided that along with it the monster of nascent heresy were to be consumed."³

"No! the disagreement betwixt Luther and Rome does not all turn on the interests of the pope. I have Luther's books now before me, and a man needs but to have his eyes in his head to see that it is the holy doctrines of the Church that he attacks. He teaches that they only worthily communicate whose consciences are surcharged with grief and confusion on account of their sins, and that baptism justifies none, but that what justifies is faith in the word of promise, to which baptism is added. 4

¹ St Luke xxiii. 2.

² Pugnis ejus pectori admotis repulerit. (Pallavicini, i. p. 112.)

³ Dummodo mecum una monstrum nascentis hæresis arderet. (Ibid. i. 97.) Seckendorff, and after him several Protestant historians, have asserted that Pallavicini himself composed the speech he has put into the mouth of Aleander. It is true, the historian-cardinal states that he had given it the form in which he presents it; but he points out the sources whence he derived it, Aleander's letters, in particular, as deposited in the Archives of the Vatican (Acta Wormatiæ, folio 66 and 99;) I consider it, therefore, as an act of partiality wholly to reject it. I quote a few sketches of this speech from both Protestant and Roman sources.

⁴ Baptismus neminem justificare, sed fidem in verbum promissionis, cui additur Baptismus. (Cochlæus. Acta Luth. 28.)

He denies the necessity of our works in order to the obtaining of the heavenly glory. He denies that we have the liberty and the power to observe the laws of nature and of God. He affirms that we sin necessarily in all that we do. Did there ever come forth from the arsenal of hell, shafts better fitted to cut the reins of shame?¹ . . . He preaches the abolition of the vows taken by the religious orders. Can any man imagine impiety more sacrilegious than that? . . . What desolations shall we not behold in the world when they who ought to be the leaven of the nations, throw aside their sacred vestments, quit the temples which used to resound with their sacred songs, and plunge into adultery, incest, and dissipation! . . .

“ Could I enumerate all the crimes of this audacious monk? He sins against the dead, for he denies the existence of purgatory;² he sins against heaven, for he would not even believe an angel from the heavens; he sins against the Church, for he pretends that all Christians are priests; he sins against the saints, for he despises their venerable writings; he sins against the councils, for he calls that of Constance an assembly of demons; he sins against the world, for he would forbid the putting to death of any one who has not committed mortal sin?

¹ In opposition to this it may be asked, was there ever a more shameless attempt to make truth seem error than is to be found in this discourse of the Romish ambassador? What need we more in order to our thus being able to recognise the Church of Rome from the mouth of her own advocate, as an opponent of the truth? What he says of the denial of the necessity of our good works, and of the assertion that in all that we do, we sin necessarily, is a mere misrepresentation, or at least partial statement of Luther's doctrines, which disowned the necessity of our good works in so far only as we should think of adding ought, by means of them, to the merits of Christ, and which imputes sinning of necessity to our corrupt nature alone, but does not understand thereby a natural and absolute necessity. But to hold forth as a weapon from hell, the doctrines that then only we worthily partake of the holy supper, when we are humbled on account of our sins; that baptism does not justify when people do not believe the promise of which it is the pledge; and that we have lost the freedom and ability to keep the laws of nature and of God, amounts to putting ourselves above the plain doctrine of Scripture, above the testimony of conscience, and above all shame. Unhappy state of Christendom, when men could trust so much to the general ignorance, as to undertake to persuade a whole assembly of Christian princes of such things! No better is it with respect to what Aleander farther on imputes to Luther as offences:—things merely by which the latter placed truth, when disacknowledged, again in the light, or set himself against error. In this sense alone was it also that he, even as Paul did, declared that he would not believe even an angel from heaven, were he to preach another Gospel, or impugned the writings of men who were accounted saints, although he did not despise them otherwise.—L. R.

² Weil er verbietet jemand mit Todes Strafe zu belegen, der nicht eine Todsünde begangen. (Seckend. p. 333.)

Some would make him out to be a pious man. . . . I have no wish to attack his private life, but would merely suggest to this assemblage that the devil deceives the people under the appearances of truth."¹

Having mentioned purgatory which was condemned by the COUNCIL of Florence, Alexander laid at the emperor's feet the papal bull upon that council. It was taken up by the archbishop of Maintz,² and handed by him to the archbishops of Cologne and of Treves, who gravely received it, and passed it on to the other princes. And having now concluded his charge against Luther, the nuncio proceeded to the next point, which was that of justifying Rome.

"At Rome," says Luther, people promise one thing with their mouths, and perform the contrary with their hands. Granting that this is true, ought not the inference deduced from it to be quite the reverse? If the ministers of a religion live conformably to its precepts, it is a mark of its being false. Such was the religion of the ancient Romans. . . . Such is that of Mahomet, and that of Luther himself; but not such is the religion that the Roman pontiffs teach us. Yes, the doctrine they profess condemns them all, as having committed offences: many as guilty men, and some (I candidly acknowledge) as great criminals.³ . . . That doctrine delivers over their deeds to the censure of men during lifetime, and to historical infamy after death.⁴ Now what gratification, what use, I ask, could the pontiffs have found in inventing such a religion?

¹ It is indeed a strong proof of the purity of Luther's life that even so bitter an enemy as Alexander knows of nothing to allege against it, and must let that matter alone. This is of itself enough to convict of deliberate slander, what malice alleges against him in this respect, in general imputations without distinct proof.—L. R.

² The elector archbishop of Maintz was the second person in the empire, being as high chancellor next to the emperor. He was moreover president of the electoral college, visitor of the Aulic council of the chamber of Spires, and all the other courts of the emperor, and guardian of the Archives, and matricula. He crowned the emperor. All foreign princes and states directed to him what propositions they had to make to the empire, and to him the princes and states of Germany made their complaints in order to the redress of their grievances. From this it will be seen how carefully the interests of the church of Rome were provided for in the German confederation, and of what importance the personal character of this elector-archbishop was to the progress of the Reformation. Tr.

³ . . . Multos ut quadantenus reos, non nullos (dicam ingenue) ut scelestos. (Card. Pall. i. p. 101.)

⁴ Linguarum vituperationi dum vivunt, historiarum infamiae post mortem. (Ibid.)

“The Church, shall we be told, was not governed by the Roman pontiffs during the first ages of her history.—What would they infer from this? With such argument you might persuade men to live upon acorns, and princesses to wash their own linen.”¹

But the grand object of the nuncio's aim was his adversary the Reformer. Filled with indignation at those who said that he ought to be allowed a hearing: “Luther,” he exclaimed, “will take lessons from no man. The pope had already summoned him to repair to Rome, but thither he never went. The pope then summoned him to appear at Augsburg, before his legate, and he appeared there only after he had obtained a safe-conduct from the emperor, that is to say, after the legate's arms had been tied, and the only thing he was left free to use, was his tongue.² . . . Ah,” said Aleander, turning to Charles V., “I supplicate your Majesty, not to do anything which may turn to your disgrace! Let not your Majesty meddle at all with an affair with which laymen have nothing to do. Perform your part. Let Luther's doctrine be interdicted by you throughout the empire; let his writings be everywhere burnt. Fear nothing. There are in Luther's errors enough to cause the burning of a hundred thousand heretics.³ . . . And whom have we to fear? . . . The mob? . . . Its insolence makes it seem terrible before battle, but its cowardice makes it contemptible when the conflict is over. Is it foreign princes? . . . But the king of France has prohibited Luther's doctrines from entering his kingdom; while the king of England⁴ prepares to give him a blow from his royal hand. You know what is thought by Hungary, Italy, and Spain, and none of your neighbours, however he may hate you, wishes you such mischief as that

¹ In the two last parts of this envoy's oration, we first of all find an open acknowledgement of the ill behaviour of certain popes; and a tacit admission that the Church was not governed by the Romish popes in the first centuries. Truly the first was too notorious, and for the last he knew of no proof that he could show. Far-sought and inadequate are the subterfuges to which he has recourse.—L. R.

² Quod idem erat, ac revinctis legati brachiis, et lingua solum soluta. (Ibid. p. 109.)

³ Das 100,000 Ketzer ihrentthalben verbrannt werden. (Seckend. p. 3:2.)

⁴ M. Merle d'Aubigné has it “Great Britain,” forgetting that the crowns of England and Scotland were not then united, and that the title “king of Great Britain” was first assumed by the prince in whose person they were first united.
F.R.

heresy involves. For if our enemy's house be hard by our own, we may wish he had a fever in it, but not the plague. . . . What are all those Lutherans?—a parcel of insolent grammarians, of depraved priests, disorderly monks, ignorant advocates, degraded nobles, and misguided and perverted common people. How much more numerous, able, and powerful is the catholic party? An unanimous decree from this illustrious assemblage will enlighten the simple, put the imprudent on their guard, give decision to the wavering, and strengthen the feeble. . . . But if the axe be not laid to the root of that venomous plant, if a death-blow be not given to it, then . . . I behold it covering the heritage of Jesus Christ with its branches, changing the Lord's vineyard into a horrible forest, transforming the kingdom of God into a haunt for wild animals, and reducing Germany to that frightful state of barbarism and desolation, into which Asia has been brought by the superstition of Mahomet."

The nuncio ceased. He had spoken for three hours, and the meeting was captivated by his eloquence.¹ "The princes," says

¹ Maimbourg, the Jesuit historian of Lutheranism, highly commends this extravagant tirade of the nuncio, saying that he spoke "excellently well," but his own admissions in regard to Luther's many valuable qualities, and the piety of some of his writings, are strikingly inconsistent with any such commendations of Alexander, unless this address be considered a piece of mere rhetorical display. That the reader may judge for himself, I subjoin some of Maimbourg's graphic touches in describing the Reformer, and it is the more necessary to introduce these, as the papists of France and possibly of other countries, reckoning on the ignorance of the people of our day, have in a widely disseminated work intitled, "The Deaths of the Impious," represented Luther as a monster of immorality. Maimbourg speaks of him as "enjoying a high reputation at Wittenberg," and gives ample grounds for this having been deserved. After referring to his birth and early studies—to the change of character he experienced on the sudden death of his friend, and the terror he experienced during a thunder-storm—and to his being welcomed into the monastery at Erfurt, he proceeds thus: "In fact he made great progress there in the higher branches of learning, to which he assiduously applied himself, so that as he soon passed for the brightest genius, and ablest man of his order in Germany, the vicar general, who was indefatigable in promoting the success of the university of Wittenberg, called him to preach, and at the same time to teach philosophy there. Of these employments he acquitted himself with great applause, and acquired so much consideration among his brethren that he was sent to Rome for the settlement of certain differences which were then throwing the order into two opposite parties, and showed so much ability and good conduct in that negotiation, in which he succeeded, that at his return to Wittenberg the vicar-general absolutely desired that he should assume the bonnet of a doctor of divinity; which was done with great solemnity, the elector of Saxony, who had heard him preach with much satisfaction, having desired to act magnificently, in furnishing the expenses of the feast on that occasion; and thereafter the young doctor, who was then at the age of thirty, gave lectures on theology and sacred literature to a great concourse of applauding auditors.

"He was a man of lively and subtile spirit, naturally eloquent, of a lucid and polished style, infinitely laborious, and so assiduous in study that he would spend

Cochlæus, "shaken in their opinions and terrified, looked at one another, until at length murmurs were to be heard at various points against Luther and his partisans."¹ If the mighty Luther had been there, if he had been allowed to reply to that address, if, taking advantage of the admissions which what he recollected of his former master, the infamous Borgia, had forced from the Roman orator, Luther had shown that the very arguments meant to defend Rome, really condemned her; had he demonstrated

whole days at it without even allowing himself time to take a morsel of food; which led to his acquiring a pretty considerable knowledge of the languages and of the fathers, to the reading of which, and particularly of St. Augustine, of whom he made a very bad use, he was much given, contrary to the usual practice of the divines of his time. He had a powerful and robust constitution for bearing work without loss of health, a bilious and sanguine temperament, a piercing flashing eye; a pleasing tone of voice, which rose very high when once he was excited, a proud, intrepid, disdainful air, which however he could soften down when he wished to counterfeît humility, modesty, and mortification, which was not too often the case with him; and, above all, there was in his soul a vast fund of pride and presumption, inspiring him with contempt for whatever did not tally with his own views, and that spirit of brutal insolence with which he outrageously treated all who opposed his heresy, without respecting king, emperor, pope, or whatever there was most sacred and inviolable on the earth; incapable besides of retracting what he had once advanced; choleric, vindictive, imperious, desiring ever to be master, and ever fond of distinguishing himself by the novelty of what he taught, and which he wished to establish in his school on the ruins of those of the greatest geniuses, to wit, Aristotle, St. Thomas (Aquinas), Scot, St. Bonaventura, and other schoolmen, who he alleged had corrupted true philosophy, and the solid truths of Christian theology. Such was the true character of Martin Luther, in which one may say, there was a great mixture of some good and many bad qualities, and that he was much more debauched in mind than in manners, and in his life, which was spent in sufficient regularity as long as he lived in the cloister with his heresy, which completed the corruption of his mind and heart."

A careless reader would suppose from this conclusion, that the regularity of Luther's *manners and life* must have ceased with his leaving the monastery, although, with the caution forced upon Maimbourg by the acute and indefatigable French Reformed controversialists of that time, he dared not say that Luther's heresy had completed the corruption of his *morals*. The reader will be able to judge from M. M. D'Aubigne's text how far the accusations even of the more favourable of the two popish descriptions, were either wholly untrue or arose from personal and constitutional failings, which Luther himself was the first to deplore. But in regard to the main charge of pride, presumption, and obstinacy, it is singular that at the head of the catholic authorities which this heretic was led by these qualities to impugn, Maimbourg places the heathen philosopher Aristotle! and neither says a word of the profound humility with which Luther owned himself the very slave of the Word of God, nor makes the slightest acknowledgment of the immense obligations all Christendom owed to his having done far more to establish the authority of the holy Scriptures, than he ever did to weaken that of Aristotle and the schoolmen. Not only is there no such acknowledgment, but although nothing was better known to the Jesuit than Luther's diligent perusal of the Scriptures, he carefully abstains from mentioning these in stating that he was "much given to the reading of the fathers, contrary to the usual practice of the divines of his time," who certainly as little gave themselves to the study of the Scriptures. TR.

¹ Vehementer exterriti atque commoti, alter alterum intuebantur, atque in Lutherum ejusque fautores murmurare cœperunt. (Cochlæus, p. 28.)

that the doctrines that clearly convicted her of guilt, were no invention of his, as the orator had alleged, but were the very religion which Jesus Christ had given to the world, and which the Reformation had restored to its original lustre; had he presented an exact and animated picture of the errors and abuses of the popedom, and pointed to how it had changed the religion of Jesus Christ into an instrument of aggrandisement and of plunder, the effect of the nuncio's harangue would even at that moment have been neutralised; but no one rose to speak. The meeting remained under the impression of that discourse; deeply moved, and hurried away by its feelings, it was prepared to tear Luther's heresy up by the roots from the soil of the empire.¹

Nevertheless, the victory was apparent only. It was the will of God that Rome should have an opportunity of displaying her reasons and her powers. The greatest of her orators had spoken at a meeting of the princes; he had spoken out all that Rome had to say for herself. But it proved precisely the popedom's final effort, and with respect to many who heard it, was to be the signal of its defeat. If in order to the triumph of truth it must be openly confessed, so error has only to be proclaimed without reserve, in order to its perishing. Neither the one nor the other in order to complete its course, should be concealed. All things are made manifest by light.

IV. A few days sufficed to dissipate these first impressions, as ever happens when a speaker would conceal his lack of sound argument beneath a heap of sonorous words. The greater number of the princes were ready to sacrifice Luther; but none wished to immolate the prerogatives of the empire and the grievances of the German nation. They were willing enough to deliver up the insolent monk who had spoken so high, but it was alleged, that the pope might be made to feel more strongly that a reform was justly required when the call for it proceeded from the mouth of the nation's chiefs. It was Luther's greatest personal enemy, also, that spoke with most energy against the encroachments of Rome. The grandson of Podiebrad, king of Bohemia, though repelled by the doctrines of grace as preached by the Reformer, had not yet lost hopes of seeing a moral and

¹ *Lutheranum hæresim esse funditus evellendam.* (Pallavicini, i. p. 101. Roscoe's Leo X. iv. p. 30.)

ecclesiastical reform effected. What excited so much irritation against the Wittenberg monk, was his marring the whole matter with his despised doctrines. But now that he saw the nuncio affect to confound Luther and Church reform in one common condemnation, duke George suddenly rose in the midst of the assembled princes, to the great amazement of such as were aware how much he hated the Reformer. "The Diet," said he, "ought not to forget its grounds of complaint against the court of Rome. What a multitude of abuses have found their way into our states! Look at the annates¹ which the emperor freely bestowed for the general benefit of Christendom, now exacted as a debt: see the Roman courtiers daily inventing new ordinances with the view of engrossing ecclesiastical benefices, and selling or farming them out to others; see the multitude of allowed transgressions, rich transgressors shamefully tolerated, while those that are too poor to redeem themselves, are pitilessly punished; the popes cease not to bestow reversionary appointments and reservations on the people about their palaces, to the detriment of those to whom the benefices belong; commissions to negotiate the sale of appointments in abbeys and monasteries are handed to cardinals, to bishops, to prelates who keep the revenues to themselves, so that where those establishments should be supporting from twenty to thirty inmates, they have now none at all; the stations are infinitely multiplied, and indulgence shops are established in all the streets and market places of our cities; St. Anthony's shops; those of the Holy Ghost; those of St. Hubert; those of St. Cornelius; those of St. Vincent, and many more besides; associations that purchase at Rome the right to hold such sale rooms, then purchasing from their bishops leave to exhibit their wares to advantage, and in order to find money for all this, squeezing and emptying poor people's purses; the indulgences which ought to be granted only for the salvation of souls, and which ought only to be merited by prayers, and fasts, and deeds of charity, sold for money; bishops' officials overpowering persons of little consideration with penances to be performed for blasphemies, adulteries, debaucheries, violations of such or such a holiday, but not so much as addressing a reprimand

¹ A year's revenue claimed by the popes for bulls granted to bishops and other beneficiaries. Tr.

to ecclesiastics who have incurred the guilt of such crimes; penalties imposed on the penitent, and so contrived that he may soon relapse into the same fault, and give so much more money¹

. . . such are some of the abuses that cry out against Rome. All shame has been laid aside, and people pursue but one object . . . money! more money! . . . so that preachers who ought to be teaching the truth, retail nothing but lies, and that these are not only tolerated, but even recompensed, because the more they lie, the more they gain. It is from these muddy wells that so many corrupt waters proceed. Debauchery goes hand in hand with avarice. The officials get women to come to their houses under various pretexts, and then try to seduce them, sometimes by menaces, sometimes by presents, or if they cannot succeed, they ruin them by attacking their good name.² Ah, it is the stumbling blocks thrown in their way by the clergy, that hurry so many poor souls into eternal condemnation. A universal reform must be effected. A general council must be convened for the accomplishment of such a reform. Therefore is it, most excellent princes and lords, that I supplicate you with all submission, to devote yourselves to this with all diligence.”³ Duke George handed in a list of the grievances that he recapitulated, some days after the delivery of Aleander’s speech. This important document is still preserved in the Archives at Weimar.

Never had even Luther spoken out more forcibly against the abuses of Rome; but he had done something more. The Duke signalled out the evil; Luther, together with the evil, had signalled out the cause and the remedy. He had demonstrated

¹ Sondern dass er es bald wieder begehe und mehr Geld erlegen müsse. (Weimar Archives. Seckend, p. 328.)

² Dass sie Weibesbilder unter mancherly Schein beschicken, selbige sodann mit Drohungen und Geschenken zu fällen suchen, oder in einen bösen Verdacht bringen. (Weimar. Arch. Seck., p. 330.)

³ What more is required than this powerful address of duke George, a man otherwise so much prepossessed against Luther, in order to defend the equity of his cause contrary to the speaker’s own purpose, and to show the great necessity that there was for a reformation? In that the prince thus involuntarily promoted the cause of the Reformer, so seasonably removed the unfavourable impression made by Aleander’s address, and interposed a new obstacle to the accomplishment of the wicked plans formed against Luther, who can fail to acknowledge the very special interposition of Providence, operating just so much the more manifestly and powerfully, in that it was an enemy of Luther’s cause that here spoke so much to its advantage, and so precisely at the fitting time?—L. R.

that the sinner receives the true indulgence, that which comes from God, solely by faith in the grace and merits of Jesus Christ; and that simple yet potent doctrine had subverted all the places of traffic established by the priests. "How become a godly man?" said he one day. "A cordelier will reply: Wear a gray hood and gird yourself with a cord. A Roman will tell you to hear mass and to fast. But a Christian will say: Faith in Christ is what alone justifies and saves. Previous to works we must have eternal life. Now when we are born anew and made children of God by the word of grace, then we do good works."¹ 2

The duke's discourse was such as might have been expected from a secular prince; Luther's, was that of a Reformer. The Church's grand malady consisted in her having thrown herself wholly into externals; her having made outward and material things of all her doings and all her graces. The indulgences reached the extreme point in this course, and forgiveness of sin, which of all things in Christianity is the most spiritual, was to be bought at shops as if it could be eaten or drunk. Luther's grand enterprise lay precisely in this, that he took advantage of this extreme point in Christianity in order to lead man back to the original source of life, and to restore the dominion of the Holy Ghost in the sanctuary of the heart. Here, as often happens, the remedy was found in the disease, and the two extremes met. Forthwith, after having for so many ages expanded herself externally in ceremonies, and human observances and practices, the Church began to re-expand herself inwardly, in faith, hope, and charity.

The duke's discourse proved the more effective from his opposition to Luther being better known. Other members of the Diet urged attention to different grievances, and their complaints were seconded even by the ecclesiastical princes.³ "We have a

¹ L. Opp, (W.) xxii. 748, 752.

² Here we find thus further explained, to what extent Luther excluded our works. It was works that did not proceed from faith and a renewed heart, whereby men would merit everlasting life, and which thus in so far preceded life. People must first be made partakers of life by faith, and children of God, if with a renewed heart they would do works pleasing to God. This is the plain doctrine of the Bible and recommends itself by a salutary experience. In vain would all human wisdom, whether in the Romish or in the present self-styled Protestant Church, turn against it.—L. R.

³ Seckend. Vorrede von Frick

pontiff," said they, "who loves nothing but the chase and other such gratifications; the church livings of the German nation are bestowed at Rome on artillery men, falconers, footmen, ass-drivers, stable-boys, body-guards-men, and such like persons, at once ignorant, incapable, and strangers to Germany."¹

The Diet appointed a commission to reckon up all the grievances complained of; it found them amount to a hundred and one. A deputation consisting of the secular and ecclesiastical princes, presented an abstract of them to the emperor, conjuring him to obtain redress as he had solemnly engaged to do in the agreement he had subscribed at his coronation. "How many Christian souls lost for ever!" said they to Charles V. "what depredations, what extortions, arising from the scandals with which the spiritual chief of Christendom surrounds himself! The ruin and disgrace of our people must be prevented. Therefore do we, with one voice, beseech you most humbly and at the same time in the most pressing manner, to give orders for a general reformation, and to undertake and accomplish the same."² There was at that time an unseen influence in Christian society, working at once on princes and people; a wisdom from above that drew even the adversaries of the Reformation into its wake, and prepared that emancipation, the hour for the arrival of which had now sounded.

Charles could not but feel the representations thus made by the empire. Neither the nuncio nor the emperor had expected them. The latter straightway recalled the edict ordaining Luther's writings to be committed to the flames in all parts of the empire, and substituted in its place a provisional order that those books should be handed over to the magistrates.

The assembly was not content with this; it desired that the Reformer should appear. It is unjust, said his friends, to condemn Luther without a hearing, and without knowing from himself whether he be the author of the books that are ordered to be burnt. His doctrines, said his adversaries, have taken such hold of men's hearts that it is not possible to arrest their

¹ Büchsenmeistern, Falknern, Pfistern, Eseltreibern, Stall-knechten, Trabanten . . . (Knapps Nachlese nützl. Ref. Urkunden, iii. p. 262.)

² Dass eine Besserung und gemeine Reformation geschehe. (Ibid. p. 275.)

progress, unless we ourselves hear him. There will be no disputation with him; and if he own his writings and refuse to retract, then, electors, princes, states of the holy empire, all of us together, loyal to the faith of our forefathers, will assist your majesty with our utmost powers in the execution of your decrees.¹

Aleander now became alarmed, and dreading alike Luther's well known courage and the ignorance of the princes, he used every endeavour to prevent the Reformer's making his appearance. From Charles's ministers he went to such of the princes as were best disposed towards the pope, and from those princes to the emperor himself.² "It is not to be endured," he would say, "that the judicial sentences of the sovereign pontiff should be questioned. There will be no discussion held with Luther, you say; but," he would go on to insist, "may we not look for some sedition being excited by the mighty influence of that audacious man, his fire-flashing eyes, his ready speech, and the mysterious spirit that animates him?"³ Even now many revere him as a saint, and likenesses of him are to be found every where, surrounded with a glory, as if his head were that of one of the blessed⁴ . . . If you would have him summoned to appear, surely at least you will not put him under the protection of the public faith!"⁵ These last words might be expected to frighten Luther or to prepare his destruction.

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xxii. p. 567.

² Quam ob rem sedulo contestatus est apud Cæsaris administratos . . . (Pallavicini, i. p. 113.)

³ Lingua promptus, ardore vultus, et oris spiritu ad concitandam seditionem . . . (Ibid.)

⁴ Considering the shortness of the time during which Luther had been before the people of Germany, the extent and amount of his personal influence seem quite unprecedented and confounding. In endeavouring to account for this, it is not enough to say, that by his powerful popular eloquence, ready wit, and tremendous powers of sarcasm and declamation, he had engrossed to himself a vast amount of the interest that had long been increasing in Germany, on the subject of "the grievances against Rome." Besides that in this respect, he had rivals of older standing in Ulrich Hutten and F. von Sickingen, the question still remains: how did it happen that people listened so readily to that large proportion of Luther's teaching which was purely doctrinal, and not immediately connected with any practical reforms?

The answer to this has been suggested to us by the following passage from Mainbourg: "The people in different parts of Germany who were perpetually spoken to on the subject of the tyranny of the Roman antichrist, looked upon Luther as a great prophet, whom God had raised up for the re-establishment of the dominion of God's word in the Church, and for its deliverance from the yoke of human laws and traditions, by which Christians, whom Jesus Christ had restored to liberty, were miserably oppressed. *And as he repressed vice with great force in his preachings; had already composed in German and in*

The nuncio found easy access to the minds of the Spanish grandees. So ardent was the flame of their fanaticism, that they were impatient to proceed to the annihilation of the new heresy. Frederick duke of Alva, in particular, was transported with rage every time reform was so much as mentioned.¹ He would fain have waded in the blood of all its followers. Luther had not yet been summoned to make appearance, and his single name agitated the minds of all Christendom's assembled lords at Worms.

The only man who seemed now at peace, was the very person

Latin many books of piety, expositions of the ten commandments of God, of the Lord's prayer, of the Epistles and Gospels read during Lent, the song of the Virgin, the Psalms, and of the epistle to the Galatians, where he says some very good things and that, moreover, he seemed quite disinterested and of a regular life," &c.

The first steps of the career of merely political reformers are seldom beyond the suspicion of having vanity, ambition, or some other selfish passion for their motives; and it is well for such men if, at the close of a long and active lifetime, they have succeeded in establishing for themselves the praise of disinterestedness and genuine patriotism. But it will be seen that Luther began by giving unquestionable proofs to his countrymen that he had their highest interests, not his own personal aggrandisement, at heart. These proofs lay before them in his first sermons and publications—those in which even Maimbourg allows that he had said *some very good things*—in which he spoke from profound personal convictions of his own nothingness and worthlessness, and from intimate experience of the grace of God in Christ—those writings, in short, in which he appears as the simple doctor of the Word of God, not as the impugnér of any of the errors or corruptions of an institution like the popedom, in opposing which he might, as he did, gain for himself an illustrious name in history as one of the greatest benefactors of mankind. Those publications enabled the Germans to say of Luther what one illustrious ancient Roman had said of another: *Non in luce modo et ante oculos civium magnus sed intus domique præstantior*. That any man's popularity and influence should have sprung from so respectable a source, is highly creditable to the Germans of the sixteenth century, and proves that God had been preparing many hearts for the reception of his own long obscured and neglected truth.

May God grant that those who in the various Churches of the Reformation are standing forward as the opponents of the errors and abuses that have crept into them, may have an influence and popularity resting on an equally solid foundation, and that more and more of the spirit that can appreciate genuine Christian excellence, may be diffused among the body of the people at home and abroad.

In concluding this note, we may mention that no sooner has Maimbourg accounted for Luther's popularity among the people, by referring to the *strict morality and piety of his pulpit ministrations and published works*, than he proceeds to explain his popularity with "the very corrupt clergy," by attributing it to his unceasingly preaching a liberty "*which agreeably fluttered their passions*." So totally ignorant was this Jesuit of the consistency of the liberty of the Gospel with the holiness of its Author, that in his attempts to malign the man who preached both, he falls into the grossest self-contradictions—an extravagance of hostility which, alas! is not confined to papists, but is perpetually occurring among worldly men of every age. Tr.

⁶ *Haud certe fidem publicam illi præbendam . . .* (Pallavicini, i. p. 113.)

¹ *Albæ dux videbatur aliquando furentibus modis agitari . . .* (Ibid. p. 362.)

who was making all the powers of the earth so ill at ease. Luther's own friends were afraid. "Nothing now remains for us," wrote Melancthon to Spalatin, "but your good wishes and your prayers. Oh! would God but redeem the salvation of the Christian people with our blood."¹ But Luther, a stranger to fear, shutting himself up in his peaceful cell, meditated on the words, while applying them to himself, in which Mary the mother of our Lord, exclaims: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his name. He hath showed strength with his arm. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree."² The following are some of the reflections that crowded upon Luther's heart: "*He that is mighty* . . . says Mary. Oh! this was very bold in a young woman! With a single word she strikes the strong with weariness, the mighty with weakness, the wise with folly, all that have a glorious name on the earth with disgrace, and she lays at the feet of God alone all strength, all might, all wisdom, and all glory."³—*His arm*, she goes on to say, and thus she calls that power whereby he acts of himself, without the aid of the creatures: mysterious power! . . . operating in secrecy and in silence, until it has accomplished the purpose for which it was put forth. Destruction is there, although no one has seen it coming. Restoration is there, although no one has suspected it. He abandons his children to oppression and feebleness, so that each of them is ready to say that they are lost! . . . But even then it is that he is most strong; for it is when man's strength ceases that that of God begins. Let faith only wait upon him . . . And on the other hand, God allows his adversaries to lift themselves aloft in their grandeur and their might. He withdraws from them the aid of his strength and allows them to inflate themselves with their own."⁴ He empties them of his eternal wisdom and leaves them to replenish themselves with the wisdom

¹ Utinam Deus redimat nostro sanguine salutem Christiani populi. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 362.)

² Gospel according to St. Luke. Chap. i. ver. 46—55.

³ *Magnificat*. L. Opp. Wittemberg. Deutsch. Ausg. iii. p. 11, &c.

⁴ Er zieht seine Krafft heraus und læsst sie von eigener Krafft sich aufblasen. Ibid.

which is but of a day. And while they lift themselves on high in the tinsel lustre of their power, God's arm is withdrawn and their work . . . it vanishes like a soap bubble that bursts and disappears."

It was on the 10th of March, at the moment that his name was filling the imperial city with alarm, that Luther finished this exposition of the *Magnificat*.

He was not allowed to remain long in his quiet retreat. In compliance with the elector's orders, Spalatin sent him a note of the articles of which a retraction was demanded from him. A retraction after the refusal at Augsburg! . . . "Fear not," he writes to Spalatin, "that I will retract a single syllable, since their only argument lies in alleging that my writings are opposed to the rites of what they call the church. If the emperor Charles require my appearance only to have my retraction, I will reply to him that I will remain here, and it will be as if I had been at Worms and had returned again. But if, on the contrary, the emperor want me for the purpose of putting me to death, as a foe to the empire, I am ready to appear at his summons;² for with the help of Christ I will never abandon the Word on the field of battle. I know it; these blood-thirsty men will never rest until they have taken my life. Oh! that there were none but papists to imbrue their hands in my blood!"

V. The emperor came to a decision at last. Luther's appearance at the bar of the Diet seemed the only feasible means of winding up, in any way, an affair that now engrossed the whole empire; and Charles V. resolved to summon him, yet without giving him a safe-conduct. Here Frederick had again to interpose in the character of protector. No one could shut his eyes to the jeopardy in which the Reformer was placed. "Luther's friends," says Cochlæus, "dreaded lest he should be delivered over to the power of the pope, or lest the emperor himself should consign him to execution, as a perfidious heretic with whom no faith was to be kept."² On this subject the princes held a consultation, leading to a long and stormy discussion³

¹ Si ad me occidendum deinceps vocare velit . . . offeram me venturum. (L. Epp. i. p. 574.)

² Tanquam perfido hæretico nulla sit servanda fides. (Cochlæus, p. 28.)

³ Longa consultatio, difficilisque disceptatio. (Ibid.)

Struck, at length, with the wide-spread agitation of people's minds, extending to almost every section of Germany,¹ and dreading lest some sudden tumult or dangerous sedition, which would of course be in Luther's favour, should break forth upon the road as he pursued his journey, the princes concluded it to be their wisest plan to set men's minds at ease with regard to him, and not only the emperor but the elector of Saxony, duke George and the landgrave of Hesse, through whose territories he would have to pass, each gave him a safe-conduct.

On the 6th of March, Charles V. signed the following summons addressed to Luther:

"Charles by the grace of God elected Roman emperor, always Augustus, &c. &c. Honourable, beloved and pious!² We and the States of the Holy Empire here met, having resolved to hold an inquest³ touching the doctrine and the books thou hast now for some time published, we have granted thee for thy journey hither, and thy returning hence into a place of safety, our safe-conduct and that of the Empire, which we send thee annexed hereto. It is our sincere desire that thou dost forthwith put thyself in readiness for this journey, so that within the space of twenty-one days fixed in our safe-conduct, thou mayest certainly be found here within call, and that thou fail not in this. Fear neither injustice nor violence. We desire firmly to maintain our safe-conduct aforesaid, and we wait for thine answering to our appeal. In this respect thou wilt comply with our serious counsel.

"Given in our imperial city of Worms, the sixth day of the month of March, the year of our Lord 1521, and the second of our reign.

"CHARLES."

"According to the order from my Lord, the Emperor, signed with his own hand,

"ALBERT, Cardinal of Maintz, Arch-chancellor.

"NICOLAS ZWYL."

The safe-conduct contained in this letter bore the address.

¹ Cum autem grandis ubique per Germaniam fere totam excitata esset . . . animorum commotio. (Cochlæus, p. 28.)

² *Honorabilis, Dilecte, Devote*, in the Latin. TR.

³ *Scrutinium*, in the Latin. TR.

"To the honourable, our dear and pious doctor Martin Luther, of the order of Augustinians."

It began thus:

"We Charles, fifth of that name, by the grace of God elected Roman emperor, ever Augustus, King of Spain, of the two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, of Hungary, of Dalmatia, of Croatia, &c.. Arch-duke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Hapsburg, of the Flanders and the Tyrol, &c. &c."

Then, the king of so many nations, giving to wit that he had summoned before him an Augustinian monk called Luther, ordained all the princes, lords, magistrates, and others, to respect the safe-conduct which he had given him, under penalty of being punished by the emperor and the empire.¹

Thus the emperor bestowed the epithets "dear, honourable, pious," on one whom the chief of the Church had smitten with excommunication. The intention of those who drew up this document, was to remove all distrust from the minds of Luther and his friends. Gaspard Sturm was charged with the delivery of this message to the Reformer, and to accompany him to Worms. Dreading the public indignation, the elector wrote on the 12th of March to the magistrates of Wittemberg, to see to the safety of that officer of the emperor's, and to provide a guard for him should they judge it to be necessary. The usher² then set out.

Thus were the designs of God carried into effect. God desired to place upon a mountain that light which he had kindled in the world; and forthwith emperor, kings, and princes, set themselves to effect his purpose without being conscious that they were doing so. It costs him little to exalt what is most abject. An act of his power suffices to raise the humble Mansfeld child from an obscure cottage to the palace of assembled kings. In his eyes there is neither littleness nor greatness, and when he sees fit, Charles V. and Luther meet.

But will Luther comply with this summons? His best friends doubted it. "Doctor Martin has been summoned hither," the

¹ Lucas Cranach's Stamm buch, ect., herausgegeben v. Chr. v. Mecheln. p. 12.

² M. Merle d'Aubigné calls this officer *heraut*, herald, but the Latin terms employed being *fœcialis*, *nuntius*, and *caduceator*, I have made it usher. Indeed his office seems nearly to have been that of usher of the black rod in the British parliament. TR.

elector wrote to his brother on the 25th of March; "but I know not whether he will come. I can augur nothing good." Three weeks later, on the 16th of April, when he perceived that the danger was increasing, that excellent prince wrote anew to duke John; "Orders against Luther are placarded on the walls. The cardinals and the bishops attack him with great acrimony. May God make all turn out well! Would to God that I could procure for him a fair reception!"¹

While these things were passing at Worms and at Wittemberg, the popedom was redoubling its blows. On the 28th of March, Thursday before Easter, Rome resounded with the solemnities attending a grand excommunication. At that period it is the custom there to publish the terrible bull *in Cæna Domini*, which is nothing but a long series of imprecations. When the day was come, the approaches to the temple where the sovereign pontiff was to officiate, were occupied at an early hour by the papal guard, and by a vast concourse of people from all parts of Italy, flocking to receive the holy father's blessing. The open space in front of the temple was decorated with branches of laurel and myrtle, tapers were burning upon the balcony, and there the pyx was held aloft. All at once the steeple bells filled the air with their solemn sounds; the pope, in his pontifical array, appeared on the balcony, borne on an arm-chair; the people dropped upon their knees; all heads were uncovered; flags were lowered, arms grounded, and a solemn silence ensued. Some instants after, the pope slowly put forth his hands, lifted them to heaven, then dropped them gently towards the earth, at the same time making the sign of the cross. This movement was repeated thrice. Then the air resounded anew with the tolling of the steeple bells, announcing to the distant villages that the pontiff had pronounced his benediction; priests impetuously rushed forward with lighted torches in their hands; these torches they threw upon the ground, brandished to and fro, and tossed from them with great violence and as if they were the flames of hell-fire; the people became agitated and tumultuous, and the words of cursing descended from aloft.²

¹ Die Cardinæle und Bischöfe sind ihm hart zuwieder . . . (Seckend. p. 365.)

² This ceremony has been described in several works; among others: Tage

On coming to the knowledge of this excommunication, Luther published the tenor of it, together with some remarks of his own, written in the sarcastic style which he knew so well how to employ. Although this publication did not appear until afterwards, we shall here introduce a few specimens of it. We are to suppose the high priest of Christendom speaking from the balcony of his great domed church, and the Wittenberg monk replying to him from the centre of Germany.¹

There is something characteristic in the contrast of the two voices.

THE POPE.—“Leo, bishop. . . .

LUTHER.—“Bishop . . . as a wolf is a shepherd: for a bishop ought to exhort according to the doctrine of salvation, not to vomit forth imprecations and maledictions. . . .

THE POPE.—“ . . . Servant of all the servants of God. . . .

LUTHER.—“In the evening when we are drunk; but in the morning we call ourselves, Leo, lord of all lords.

THE POPE.—“The Roman bishops, our predecessors, have been wont at this festival to employ the arms of justice. . . .

LUTHER.—“Which according to thee, are excommunication and anathema; but according to St. Paul, are long-suffering, kindness, and love unfeigned. (2 Cor. vi. ver. 6, 7.)

THE POPE.—“According to the duty of the apostolic charge, and for the maintenance of the purity of the Christian faith. . . .

LUTHER.—“That is to say, of the pope's temporal possessions.

THE POPE.—“And its unity, which consists in the union of the members with Christ, their chief. . . . and with his vicar. . . .

LUTHER.—“For Christ is not sufficient: some one else must be had.

THE POPE.—“In order to guard the holy communion of the faithful, we follow the ancient custom, and excommunicate and curse on the part of God Almighty, the Father. . . .

LUTHER.—“Of whom it is said: *God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world.* (John iii. 17.)

buch einer Reise durch Deutschland und Italien. (Berlin, 1817, iv. p. 94.) The main features date still farther back than the times of Luther.

For the pope's bull and Luther's commentary see “Die Bulla vom Abendessen . . .” (L. Opp. (L.) xviii. p. 1.)

THE POPE.—“ . . . And the Son and the Holy Ghost; and in virtue of the authority of the apostles Peter and Paul, . . . and in virtue of our own. . . .

LUTHER.—“ And ME! says the voracious wolf, as if the authority of God were too weak without him.

THE POPE.—“ We curse all heretics, the Garases,¹ the Patarins, the Poor men of Lyons, the Arnoldists, the Speronists, the Passagenes, the Wickliffites, the Hussites, the Fraticelli.² . . .

LUTHER.—“ For they wanted to have the holy Scriptures in their possession, and they required that the pope should be sober, and should preach the Word of God.

THE POPE.—“ And Martin Luther, lately condemned by us for a like heresy, together with all who adhere to him, and all, be they who they may, who show him any favour. . . .

LUTHER.—“ I thank thee, most gracious pontiff, for thus condemning me with all those Christians! It is an honour to me to have my name proclaimed at Rome on the occasion of a festival in a manner so glorious, and to have it associated throughout the world with the names of all those humble confessors of Jesus Christ!

THE POPE.—“ In like manner we excommunicate and curse all pirates and corsairs. . . .

LUTHER.—“ Who, then, is the greatest of all pirates and corsairs, if it be not he who carries off men's souls, casts them into chains, or puts them to death? . . .

THE POPE.—“ . . . Particularly those that haunt our sea.

LUTHER.—“ Our sea! . . . St. Peter, *our* predecessor, said: *Silver and gold have I none* (Acts iii. 6). Jesus Christ has said: *The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so.* (Luke xxii. 25). But if a waggon laden with hay must make way for a drunken man, by how much stronger reason ought St. Peter and Jesus Christ to yield precedence to the pope!

¹ This name has been altered; read Gazares or Cathares.

² All sundry kinds of sects which during the times that preceded the Reformation, arose in divers countries, Germany, France, England, Bohemia, even Italy itself, in the midst of the deeply corrupted Church, and openly opposed that corruption, but were on that account denounced and persecuted as heretics. —L. R.

THE POPE.—“ In like manner we excommunicate, and we curse all who falsify our bulls and apostolic letters. . . .

LUTHER.—“ But the Letters of God, the Scriptures of God, all the world may condemn them and burn them.

THE POPE.—“ In like manner we excommunicate and we curse all who shall stop supplies of provisions on their way to our court of Rome. . . .

LUTHER.—“ He barks and snaps, like a dog when one would take his bone from him.¹

THE POPE.—“ In like manner we condemn, and we curse all who retain judiciary dues, fruits, tythes, revenues, pertaining to the clergy. . . .

LUTHER.—“ For Jesus Christ hath said: *If any man will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also* (Mat. v. 40), and we now give the commentary of the same.

THE POPE.—“ Whatever be their exalted station, their dignity, their order, their power, their rank; should they even be bishops or kings. . . .

LUTHER.—“ For *there will be false teachers among you, who will despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities*, saith the Scripture, (Jude, 8).

THE POPE.—“ In like manner we condemn, and we curse all who, in one way or another, do prejudice to the city of Rome, the kingdom of Sicily, the islands of Sardinia and Corsica, the patrimony of St. Peter in Tuscany, the duchy of Spoleto, the marquisate of Ancona, the Campagna, the cities of Ferrara and Benevento, and all the other cities or territories, pertaining to the Church of Rome.

LUTHER.—“ O Peter, poor fisherman! whence have Rome and all these kingdoms come into thy hands? I salute thee, Peter! king of Sicily! . . . and fisherman at Bethsaida!

THE POPE.—“ We excommunicate and curse all chancellors, counsellors, parliaments, procurators, governors, officials, bishops, and others, who oppose our letters of exhortation, invitation, prohibition, mediation, execution. . . .

LUTHER.—“ For the holy see seeks only a life of laziness, magnificence, and debauchery, and to issue orders, talk big

¹ Gleich wie ein Hund ums Beines willen. (L. Opp. (L.) p. 12.

deceive, lie, defame, seduce, and commit all sorts of malicious acts, in peace and safety. . . .

“ . . . Lord, arise! it is not as the papists pretend. Thou hast not abandoned us, and thine eyes are not averted from us!”

Thus spoke Leo X. at Rome, and Luther at Wittemberg.

The pontiff having ended these condemnations, the parchment whereon they were written was torn to shreds, and the fragments thrown among the people. Forthwith the crowd began to be violently agitated; each one darting forward in his eagerness to catch a bit of the terrible bull. In these were to be found the sacred relics presented by the popedom to the faithful, on the evening before the great day of grace and expiation. Ere long the multitude dispersed, and all around the great church returned to its accustomed silence. But it is time to return to Wittemberg.

VI. It was now the 24th of March. The imperial usher had at last entered the gates of the city which was Luther's place of residence. Gaspard Sturm waited upon the doctor, and delivered the summons from Charles V. A serious and solemn moment to the Reformer! All his friends were in consternation. No prince, without excepting Frederick the Wise, had as yet declared himself for him. The knights, it is true, gave utterance to their threats, but they were despised by the mighty Charles. Luther, however, was not discomposed. “It is not my coming to Worms,” said he, on seeing the anguish of his friends, “that the papists desire, but my condemnation, and my death.¹ It matters not! Pray, not for me, but for the Word of God. Before my blood shall have had time to grow cold, thousands upon thousands of men throughout the whole world will be held accountable for having shed it! Christ's most holy adversary, the father, the master, the generalissimo of murderers, insists on its being shed. Amen. May the will of God be done! Christ will give me his Spirit to vanquish those ministers of error. I despise them while I live, and by my death I shall triumph over them.² People are busy at Worms about constraining me to retract. My retractation will be as follows: I said formerly that the pope

¹ Damnatum et perditum. (L. Epp. i. p. 556.)

² . . . Ut hos Satanae ministros et contemnam vivos et vincam moriens. (Ibid. p. 579.)

is the vicar of Christ. Now I say that he is the adversary of the Lord, and the apostle of the devil." And when informed that all the pulpits of the Franciscans and the Dominicans resounded with imprecations and maledictions against him: "Oh the marvellous joy," said he, "that it gives me!"¹ He knew that he had done God's will, and that God was with him: wherefore, then, should his heart misgive at setting of? This purity of intention—this freedom of the conscience, is a secret yet incalculable source of strength which is never wanting to the servant of God, and renders him more invincible than all the might of mailed armies could make him.

It was then that Luther saw arrive in Wittemberg, a man who, like Melanchthon, was to be his friend for life, and whose lot it was to console the Reformer at the moment of his departure.² This was a priest of the age of thirty-six, named Bugenhagen, who was then flying from the severities with which the bishop of Camin, and prince Bogislas of Pomerania, were then persecuting the friends of the Gospel, whether these were clergymen, burgesses, or men of letters.³ Bugenhagen was born of a family of senatorial rank, at Wollin, in Pomerania, whence his being commonly called Pomeranus, and he had been teaching, since his twentieth year, at Treptow. The young had flocked to his instructions, and the charms of his society had made the nobles and the learned dispute the enjoyment of it. He was an assiduous student of divine literature, making it his prayer that he might be directed and instructed from above.⁴ Towards the close of December 1520, as he was seated one evening at supper among his friends, Luther's book on the *Babylonish Captivity* was handed in to him. "Since Christ died," said he, after running over it, "many have been the heretics who have infested the Church, but never has there been a pest equal to the author of this book." On taking it home with him, however, and after having perused and re-perused it, all his views underwent a change; truths entirely new presented themselves to his mind, and when, after an interval of some days, he had occasion to see

¹ . . . Quod mire quam guadeam! (L. Epp. i. p. 567.)

² Venit Wittembergam paulo ante iter Lutheri ad comitia Wormatiæ indicta. (Melch. Adam. vita Bugenhagii, p. 314.)

³ Sacerdotes, cives et scholasticos in vincula coniecit. (Ibid. p. 313.)

⁴ Precesque adjunxit, quibus divinitus se regi ac doceri petivit. (Ibid. p. 312.)

his colleagues again, he said to them; "The whole world has fallen into the thickest darkness. This man alone perceives the light."¹ Some priests, a deacon, the abbot himself, received the pure doctrine of salvation, and as they preached it powerfully, they drew off their hearers, says an historian, from superstition to the sole merit of Jesus Christ.² Then it was that persecution burst forth. Many were even then pining in prisons, but Bugenhagen escaped from his enemies, and reached Wittemberg. "He is a sufferer for his love to the Gospel," Melanchthon wrote immediately to the elector's chaplain; "whither could he fly if not to our *ἄστυλον*, and to the protection of our prince?"³

But Bugenhagen was welcomed by none so heartily as by Luther, whose confidence he so fully enjoyed, that it was agreed between them that he should commence delivering an exposition of the psalms as soon as the Reformer should be gone. Thus did Divine Providence bring to the spot, at the fitting time, this powerful man as a substitute in part for him whom Wittemberg was about to lose. Placed a year afterwards at the head of the church in that city, Bugenhagen presided there during the period of thirty-six years. Luther used to call him emphatically, *the Pastor*

Luther had now to set off, and such was the alarm of his friends, that they thought his death certain, unless God should miraculously interpose in his behalf. From Melanchthon not being in his own country at Wittemberg, his susceptible heart was the more undividedly attached to Luther. "Luther," he would say, "is in stead of all my friends; to me he is greater and more admirable than I can find words to express. You know how Alcibiades admired his friend Socrates;⁴ but very different is my admiration for Luther, for he is a Christian." He then adds the beautiful but simple expression, "whom as often as I contemplate, I find him ever greater than himself."⁵ Melanchthon would fain have accompanied

¹ In cimmeriis tenebris versatur; hic vir unus et solus verum videt. (Melch. Adam. vita Bugenharii, p. 313.)

² A superstitionibus ad unicum Christi meritum traducere. (Ibid.)

³ Corpus Ref. i. p. 361.

⁴ "Alcibiades was persuaded that intercourse with Socrates was a resource sent by the gods for instruction and salvation." (Plutarch, Life of Alcibiades.)

⁵ Quem quoties contempler se ipso subinde majorem judico. (Corp. Ref. i. p. 264.)

Luther into danger, but their common friends, and doubtless the doctor himself, opposed this. Who, thought they, better than Philip could fill his friend's vacant place? and should the latter never return, who, then, would there be to direct the work of the Reformation? "Ah, that it had pleased God," said Melanchthon, resigned but disappointed, "that I should be allowed to accompany him!"¹

Straightway the vehement Amsdorff declared that he would go along with the doctor. His strong mind felt a pleasure in facing danger, and his lofty spirit would have nerved him to stand before assembled kings without quailing. The elector had sent for, to come to Wittemberg as professor of law, a person of celebrity, yet remarkable for meekness, the son of a physician at St. Gall, Jerome Schurff who was then living in the closest intimacy with Luther. "He has never been able," said Luther, "to bring himself to pass sentence of death on a single malefactor."² Nevertheless, this timid person wished to be allowed to accompany the doctor on this perilous journey as his legal adviser. A young Danish student, Peter Suaven, who lodged with Melanchthon, and became celebrated afterwards for his evangelical labours in Pomerania and in Denmark, likewise declared that he would accompany his master. It was but fitting that the youth of the schools should have their representative placed at the side of the champion of the truth.

Germany was touched at the thought of the perils which were now menacing the representative of her people, and she soon found a voice worthy of herself, to give utterance to her alarms. Ulrich of Hutten shuddered at the thought of his country being smitten with such a stroke, and on the 1st of April, wrote to Charles V. himself. "Most excellent emperor," said he, "you are on the eve of destroying us, and at the same time ruining yourself. What can be the object proposed in this affair of Luther's, if it be not the destruction of our liberty and the depression of your power? Throughout the whole extent of the empire, there is not a single honest man that does not take

¹ *Utinam licuisset mihi una proficisci.* (Ibid. p. 365.) ¹ Luth. Opp. (W.) xxii. 2067, 1819.

² L. Opp. (W.) xxii. 2067, 1819.

the keenest interest in this affair.¹ The priests alone rise against Luther because of his being opposed to their exorbitant power, their disgraceful luxury, and the depravity of their lives, and because he has pleaded for the doctrine of Christ, for our country's independence, and for sanctity of manners.

"O emperor, put away from you those fair-spoken persons from Rome, those bishops, those cardinals, who want to prevent all reformation. Have you not remarked the people's distress when they beheld you on your arrival approaching the Rhine, surrounded with these red-hatted folks . . . with a herd of priests — not with a cohort of valiant warriors.

"Commit not your sovereign majesty to the keeping of those who would trample it under foot. Have compassion upon us! Drag not the whole nation to ruin along with you! Lead us on rather into the most manifest danger, lead us among swords and fires;² let all the nations conspire against us; let all their armies assail us, in such sort that we may openly show our valour rather than be thus beaten and enslaved, in darkness and secrecy, like women without arms and without a conflict. . . . Ah, we had hopes that you would have been the person to deliver us from the yoke of the Romans, and subvert the pontiff's tyranny. God grant that the future may avail more than these commencements!

"It is as if all Germany cast herself on her knees at your feet;³ tearfully besought and implored your assistance, your compassion, your good faith; and by the sacred memory of those Germans who, when all the world beside was subject to Rome, refused to bow before that haughty city, she conjures you to save her, to restore her to herself; to rescue her from bondage, and to avenge her of her tyrants!"

Thus spoke Germany to Charles V. by the mouth of the gallant knight, but was unheeded by the emperor, who probably tossed this epistle disdainfully to one of his secretaries. A Fleming, not a German, in his feelings, his personal power, not

¹ Neque enim quam lata est Germania, ulli boni sunt. . . . (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 183.)

² Duc nos in manifestum potius periculum, duc in ferrum, duc in ignes. . . . (Ibid. p. 183.)

³ Omnem nunc Germaniam quasi ad genua provolutam tibi. . . . (Ibid. p. 184.)

the empire's glory and independence, was the object that engrossed all his desires.

VII. It was now the 2d of April, and Luther had to take leave of his friends. After informing Lange, by a note, that he would pass the following Thursday or Friday at Erfurt,¹ he bade his colleagues farewell; and it was then that turning to Melancthon, he said with a voice that betrayed his feelings: "Should I not return, and should my enemies put me to death, O my brother, cease not to teach, and to abide steadfastly in the truth. Labour in my place, for I shall not be able to labour myself. If you be spared, my perishing is of little consequence." Then, committing his soul into the hands of him that is faithful, Luther entered the carriage and left Wittemberg.² The town council had supplied him with a modest conveyance, covered with cloth, which the travellers could draw close or throw open at pleasure. The imperial usher, in the decorations of his office, and carrying the eagle of the empire, preceded the party on horseback, attended by a servant. Then came Luther, Schurff, Amsdorff, and Suaven in their car. The friends of the Gospel among the burgesses of Wittemberg, looked on with deep emotion, sending up their prayers to God, and shedding many tears. Thus did Luther set out.

He soon remarked that all whom he met by the way, were saddened by unfavourable presentiments as to his fate. At Leipsick no mark of honour was shown to him; it was thought enough to present the wine usually offered. At Naumburg he met with a priest, probably J. Langer, a man zealous but severe, who carefully preserved in his study a portrait of the famous Jerome Savonarola of Ferrara, burnt at Florence, in 1498, by order of pope Alexander VI., as a martyr in the cause of liberty and good morals more than as a confessor of Gospel truth. Taking down the portrait of the Italian martyr, the priest went up to Luther, and held it out to him, without uttering a word. The latter understood what was meant by the mute portrait, but his

¹ L. Epp. i. p. 580.

² Papists ask us for signs by which the Reformers would prove their mission and calling. But granting these to be necessary, what stronger sign could ever be given than that still unshaken courage of Luther's, which, while all around were distressing themselves on his account, remained unfaltering, and eventually was aided, not disappointed by God.—L. R.

soul was not to be shaken. "It is Satan," said he, "who by these terrors, would prevent the truth from being confessed amid the assembled princes, for he foresees the blow which that is likely to inflict on his kingdom."¹ "Firmly abide by the truth thou hast acknowledged," the priest then said to him in a serious tone, "and thy God will no less firmly abide by thee."²

Having passed the night at Naumburg, where he had been hospitably received by the burgomaster, Luther arrived next evening at Weimar. He had hardly been a moment there when he heard cries resounding from all quarters: these arose from his sentence being in course of publication. "See," said the usher; he looked, and his astonished eyes beheld imperial messengers traversing the city, and posting up in all quarters the emperor's edict, enjoining Luther's publications to be delivered in to the magistrates. Luther had no doubt that an ostentatious display of these rigors had been prepared for him, in order that he might be frightened from proceeding farther, and then condemned for non-appearance. "Well, Mr. Doctor," said the usher, with a face of dismay, "are you for continuing your journey?"—"Yes," replied Luther, "although placed under interdict in all the towns through which we have to pass, I will go on! I have perfect confidence in the emperor's safe-conduct."³

While at Weimar, Luther had an audience of duke John, the elector of Saxony's brother, who resided there. That prince invited him to preach, and he complied. The words of life flowed with more than ordinary emotion from the doctor's heart, and a Franciscan monk who was among his hearers, John Vöit, the friend of Frederick Myconius, was then converted to the doctrines of the Gospel. He left the monastery two years afterwards, and at a later period was professor of theology at Wit-

¹ Terrorem hunc a Sathana sibi dixit adferri. . . . (Melch. Adam. p. 117.)

² Er wolle bey der erkandten Wahrheytt mit breytem Fuss aushalten. . . . (Mathesius Historien, p. 23. we quote the first edition, of 1566.)

³ M. Michelet professes to quote a *beau recit* of what took place at the Diet, written by Luther himself, but without referring to the part of his works in which it is to be found. According to it, it was on this occasion that he said he would enter Worms although there were as many devils to oppose him as there were tiles on the roofs, and, which affords a remarkable proof that his courage was that of faith, not mere constitutional hardihood; he considered the public condemnation of his works a proof that his safe-conduct was already set at nought at Worms, and confesses that he was trembling with fear when he expressed his resolution to enter Worms notwithstanding. Tr.

temberg. The duke gave Luther the money required for his journey.

From Weimar the doctor proceeded to Erfurt, the town where he had spent so many of his earlier days. There he hoped to see his friend Lange, if, as he had written to him, he might enter the place without danger.¹ He was still from three to four leagues from it, near the village of Nora, when he saw a body of horsemen in the distance, and was puzzled to think whether they were friends or enemies. Soon Crotus, rector of the university, Eobanus Hesse, the friend of Melancthon, and whom Luther called the prince of poets, Euricius Cordus, John Draco, and others, to the number of forty in all, consisting of members of the senate, of the university, and of the burgess class, all mounted, hailed him with shouts of welcome. The road was now covered with crowds of people from Erfurt, giving loud utterance to their joy. All were eager to obtain a sight of the mighty person who had dared to declare war with the pope.

A young man of eight and twenty, called Justus Jonas, had ridden on in advance of the rest.² Jonas, after studying law at Erfurt, had been appointed rector of that university in 1519, but having shared in the light which the Gospel was then diffusing in all quarters, he had desired to become a divine. "I believe," wrote Erasmus to him, "that God has chosen thee as an instrument for illustrating the glory of his Son, Jesus."³ All Jonas's thoughts turned towards Wittemberg and Luther. Some years before this, while as yet but a student of law, Jonas who was of a prompt and enterprising character, set off along with some of his friends on foot, and in order to reach Erasmus, who was then at Brussels, passed through forests infested by robbers, and towns ravaged by the plague. And now, could he shrink from dangers of a different kind in accompanying the Reformer to Worms? This he earnestly besought as a favour, that he would allow him to do; Luther consented, and thus met those two doctors whose lot it was to be fellow-labourers for life in the great

¹ Nisi periculum sit Erfordiam ingredi. (L. Epp. i. p. 580.)

² Hos inter qui nos prævenerat, ibat Jonas,
Ille decus nostri, primaque fama Chori.

(Eob. Hessi Elegia secunda.)

³ Velut organum quoddam electum ad illustrandam filii sui Jesu gloriam. (Erasm. Epp. v. 9.)

work of renovating the Church. Divine Providence grouped about Luther, men who were destined to be luminaries of Germany, the Melanchthons, the Amsdorffs, the Bugenhagens, the Jonas. On returning from Worms, Jonas was appointed provost of Wittenberg church, and doctor in theology. "Jonas," said Luther, "is a man whose life is worth being bought and preserved in the earth at a great price.¹ No preacher had received an equal share of the gifts that captivate an audience." "Pomeranus is exegetic," said Melanchthon, "I am a dialectician, Jonas is an orator. The words flow from him with admirable beauty, and his eloquence is full of energy. But Luther surpasses us all."² It would appear that much about the same time, one who had been a friend of Luther's in their boyhood, and a brother of Luther's also, were added to the party that accompanied him.

The Erfurt deputation now turned their horses' heads, and both the mounted and the pedestrians, surrounding Luther's carriage, escorted him to within the walls of the city. At the gate, in the public squares, and in the streets, where the poor monk had so often begged for bread, the crowd of spectators was immense. Luther alighted at the monastery of the Augustinians, where his heart used to experience the consolations of the Gospel. Lange gave him a joyful reception; Usingen, and some others of the oldest friars, showed him much coldness. A wish was felt that he should preach though interdicted from doing so, but the usher himself was borne along by the general feeling, and gave his consent.

On the Sunday after Easter, the church of the Augustinians at Erfurt was filled to overflowing. The friar who, in former days, used to open the doors and sweep the Church, entered the pulpit, and having opened the Bible, he read these words, *Peace be unto you, and when Jesus had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side*, (John xx. 19, 20). "All the philosophers," said he, "all the doctors, and writers, have applied themselves to teaching how man may obtain everlasting life, and none of

¹ Vir est quem oportuit multo prætio emptum et servatum in terra. (Weismann, i. p. 1436.)

² Pomeranus est grammaticus, ego sum dialecticus, Jonas est orator. . . . Lutherus vero nobis omnibus antecellit. (Knapp. Narr. de J. Jona, p. 581.)

them have succeeded. This is what I now wish to tell you." Such had in all ages been the grand question; Luther's hearers accordingly redoubled their attention.

"There are two kinds of works," continued the Reformer; "works extrinsic to us: those are good works; our own works, which are little worth. One man builds a church; another makes a pilgrimage to St. James's or St. Peter's; a third fasts, prays, puts on the hood, goes barefoot; another does something different still. All these works are nothing, and will perish; for our own works have no virtue in them. Now, I am about to tell you what is the true work. God hath raised again a man, the Lord Jesus Christ, in order that he may crush death, destroy sin, and shut the gates of hell. Such is the work of salvation. The devil believed that he had the Lord in his power when he beheld him between two thieves, suffering the most shameful martyrdom, accursed both of God and of man. . . . But the Divinity put forth its might, and annihilated death, sin, and hell. . . .

"Christ hath won the victory! here is the grand news! and we are saved by his work, not by our works. The pope says something very different. But I tell you, the holy mother of God herself has been saved, not by her virginity, nor by her maternity, nor by her purity, nor by her works, but solely by means of faith, and by the works of God." . . .

As Luther was speaking, a sudden crack was heard in one of the galleries, and the dread of its giving way under the weight of the crowd, produced no small agitation in the audience. Some attempted to fly, while others stood fixed to their places by fright. The speaker stopt for a moment; then extending his hand, he said with a strong voice: "Fear nothing! there is no danger: the devil would thus hinder the preaching of the Gospel, but he will not succeed.¹" Upon this those who were attempting to escape, stopt in amazement; the congregation became calm, and Luther, without allowing the devil's efforts to discompose him, went on to say: "You speak much to us about faith, you will perhaps say to me, Teach us, then, how we may obtain it. Yes, indeed, I wish to teach you that. Our Lord Jesus Christ has

¹ Agnosco insidias, hostis acerbe, tuas. (Hessi Eleg. tertia.)

said: *Peace be unto you ! behold my hands*, as much as if he had said, Behold, O man, it is I, it is I alone who have taken away thy sins, and who have redeemed thee, and now thou hast peace ! saith the Lord. . . .

"I have not eaten the fruit of the tree," said Luther, "nor have you any more done so ; but we have received the sin transmitted to us from Adam and we have sinned ourselves. In like manner I have not suffered upon the cross, nor have you so suffered ; but Christ has suffered for us ; we are justified by the work of God, and not by our own. . . . I am, saith the Lord, thy righteousness and thy redemption.¹"

"Let us believe the Gospel, let us believe St Paul—not the briefes and decretals of the popes." . . .

After preaching faith as the cause of the sinner's justification, Luther preached works as the consequence and manifestation of a man's being saved.

"Since God has saved us," said he, "let us so order our works that he may take pleasure therein. Art thou rich ? let thy goods be serviceable to the poor ? Art thou poor ? let thy services be of use to the rich ? If thy labours be useless to all but thyself, the services thou pretendest to render to God are a mere lie."²

Not a word about himself in Luther's sermon ; not one allusion to the circumstances in which he stood ; nothing about Worms, nor about Charles, nor about the nuncios ; he preaches Christ and Christ alone ; at a crisis when the world had its eyes upon him, he is not in the least taken up about himself ; and this is the mark of a true servant of God.

Luther left Erfurt, and passed through Gotha, where he again preached. Myconius adds, that just as he was leaving the church after service, the devil detached from the front of that building, some stones which had not stirred from their position for two hundred years. The doctor went on, and slept at the monastery of the Benedictines at Reinhardsbrunn ; from that he proceeded to Isenac, where he felt indisposed. Amsdorff, Jonas,

¹ See here again the old, the true Gospel. Not by *our* works, but by those of Christ, are we saved. And still, as Luther plainly intimates thereon, works have their place, as the fruits of faith, done to serve God and our neighbours, not to serve ourselves.—L. R.

² L. Opp. (L.) xii. p. 485.

Schurff, all his friends, were in the greatest alarm. He was blooded, and had the most anxious attention paid to him; the sheriff of the town, John Oswald, eagerly came with offers of assistance, and brought with him a cordial-water, after drinking which the doctor enjoyed some sleep, and recovered his strength so far, as to be able to proceed on the morrow.

The whole population of the places through which he passed rushed to meet him,¹ and his journey was but the progress of a triumph. People contemplated with deep emotion the bold man who was going to offer his head to the emperor and the empire.² A vast concourse surrounded him, and people spoke to him as he went along. "Ah," said some, "there are so many cardinals and bishops at Worms! . . . They will burn you, they will consume your body to ashes, as they did with that of John Huss." But nothing daunted the monk. "Although they should make a fire that would reach from Worms to Wittemberg, and that should flame up to heaven, in the Lord's name I would pass through it; I would appear before them, I would enter between the jaws of this behemoth, I would break his teeth, and would confess the Lord Jesus Christ."³

One day, as he happened to be going into an inn and the crowd pressing upon him as usual, an officer went forward and said to him: "Are you the man that undertakes to reform the popedom? . . . How are you to accomplish that?" . . . "Yes," replied Luther, "I am the man. I rely on Almighty God, whose word and commandment I have before me." Whereupon, struck with these words, the officer looked upon him less austere, and said: "My dear friend, what you have just told me is somewhat. I serve Charles, but your Master is greater than mine. He will assist and protect you."⁴ Such was the impression made by Luther. Even his enemies were struck as they viewed the multitudes that flocked about him; but they have depicted this journey in very different colours.⁵ The Doctor at last reached Frankfort on Sunday, the 14th of April.

¹ Iter facienti occurrebant populi. (Pallavicini, Hist. Con. Tr. i. p. 114.)

² Quacunque iter faciebant, frequens erat concursus hominum, videndi Lutheri studio. (Cochlæus, p. 29.)

³ Ein Feuer das bis an den Himmel reichte. . . . (Keil. i. p. 98.)

⁴ Nunn habt Ihr einen grössern Herrn, denn Ich. (Ibid. p. 99.)

⁵ In diversoriis multa propinatio, læta compositio, musices quoque gaudia; adeo ut Lutherus ipse alieni ænora testudine ludens, omnium in se oculos con-

The news of Luther's progress had already reached Worms. The pope's friends had never supposed that he would obey the emperor's summons. Albert, the cardinal-arch-bishop of Maintz, would have given anything to stop him on his route, and fresh devices were fallen upon in order to effect this.

On arriving at Frankfort, Luther first retired to rest, and next sent word of his approach to Spalatin, who was then with the elector at Worms. This was the only letter that he wrote in the course of his journey. "I am about to reach you," said he, "although Satan has sought to stop me on the road by attacks of indisposition. All the way from Isenac to this I have been in a languishing condition, and am still in a state that I never was in before. I am informed that Charles has published an edict with a view to frighten me. But Christ lives, and we shall enter Worms in spite of all the gates of hell and all the powers of the air.¹ You may therefore be preparing lodgings for me."

The day following Luther paid a visit to the well-conducted school of William Ness, a learned geographer of those days. "Apply yourselves," said he to the boys whom he found there, "to the reading of the Bible and to searching after truth." Then, laying his right hand on the head of one, and his left on that of another of the children, he pronounced a blessing on the whole school.

And if Luther blessed children, he was at the same time the hope of the aged. A widow, who was advanced in years and a servant of God, Catherine of Holshausen, went to him and said: "My father and mother foretold me that God would raise up a man who would oppose papal vanities and save the Word of God. I trust that thou art that man, and I wish thee, for thy work, the grace of God's Holy Spirit."²

These sentiments were far from being universally entertained at Frankfort. John Cochleus, dean of the Church of our Lady, was one of the church of Rome's most devoted members, and when he saw Luther passing through Frankfort on his way to Worms, he could not suppress his alarm. Nay, thinking that

verteret, velut Orpheus quidam, sed rasmus adhuc et cucullatus, eoque mirabilior. (Cochleus, p. 29.)

¹ Intrabimus Wormatiam, invitis omnibus portis inferni et potentatibus aeris. (L. Epp. i. p. 987.)

² Ich hoffe dass du der Verheissene . . . (Cyp. Hil. Ev. p. 608.)

the Church stood in need of zealous defenders, although nobody, it is true, had called for his services, but that he thought of little moment, no sooner was Luther gone, than he set off after him, being resolved, as he said, to sacrifice his life in defence of the Church's honour.¹

Great now was the consternation that prevailed in the camp of the pope's friends. The arch-heretic was on his way thither; every day, every hour, was bringing him nearer Worms, and should he enter, all might be lost. The arch-bishop Albert, the confessor Glapio, and all the political persons immediately about the emperor, were troubled at the thought. How were they to prevent this monk from coming? To carry him off was impossible, for he had Charles's safe-conduct. Their only resource lay in stratagem; and forthwith these able men contrived the following scheme. The emperor's confessor, and his grand chamberlain, Paul of Amsdorf, set off in great haste from Worms² to the castle of Ebernburg, about ten leagues from that city, and the residence of Francis of Sickingen, the knight who had offered Luther an asylum. Bucer, the young Dominican, chaplain to the elector palatine, and who became a convert to the doctrines of the Gospel at the time of the disputation at Heidelberg, was then a refugee in the "hostelry of the righteous." The knight himself, understanding little about religious matters, was easily duped, and the confessor's designs were favoured, also, by the character of the man who had previously been palatine chaplain. Bucer, in fact, was for peace, and after distinguishing betwixt fundamental and secondary points, he thought that the latter might be sacrificed to peace and unity.³

Charles's chamberlain and confessor now commenced their attack. They gave Sickingen and Bucer to understand that it was all over with Luther, should he appear at Worms, and declared that the emperor was about to send some learned men to Ebernburg to confer with the doctor there. "It is under

¹ Lutherum illuc transeuntem subsequutus, ut pro honore Ecclesiæ vitam suam . . . exhoneret. (Cochlæus, p. 36.) The same person we so often quote.

² Dass der Keyser seinem Beichtvater und Ihrer Majest. Ober-Kammerling, zu Sickingen schickt. (L. Opp. xvii. p. 587.)

³ Condofaciebat τὰ ἀναγκαιὰ a probabilibus distinguere, ut scirent quæ retinenda . . . (M. Adami, Vit. Buceri, p. 223.)

your protection," said they to the knight, "that the two parties will place themselves."—"We agree with Luther on all essential points," they said to Bucer; "the only question is about some matters of secondary importance: you will act as mediator betwixt us." The knight and the doctor were both shaken, on which the confessor and the chamberlain continued to press their object. They told Sickingen that the invitation to Luther must come from him, but that Bucer must be the person to deliver it.¹ All was settled to a wish. Let but the over-credulous Luther come to Ebernburg, and who will be able to defend him then?

Luther had now reached Oppenheim and his safe-conduct had but three days more to run, when behold a troop of persons was seen approaching, at whose head he soon recognised the same Bucer with whom he had held such confidential conversations at Heidelberg.² "These horsemen," said Bucer, after the first cordial greetings were over, "belong to Francis of Sickingen. He has sent me forward for the purpose of convoying you to his strong hold."³ The emperor's confessor wishes to talk with you. His influence over Charles is unbounded; every thing may be settled. But beware of Aleander!" Jonas, Amsdorff, and Schurff knew not what to think. Bucer insists; but Luther feels no hesitation. "I continue my journey," says he to Bucer, "and if the emperor's confessor has anything to say to me, he will find me at Worms. I will go to the place to which I have been summoned."

Meanwhile Spalatin himself began to feel uneasy and alarmed. Surrounded at Worms with the enemies of the Reformation, he heard it said that no regard should be paid to the safe-conduct of a heretic. He became anxious about the safety of his friend. At the moment that the latter was approaching the city, a messenger appeared, charged to say to him, on the part of the chaplain, that he must not think of entering Worms! So much for his best friend, the confident of the elector, Spalatin himself! . . . The imperturbable Luther looked steadily at the messenger and replied: "Go—tell your master that even although

¹ Dass er sollte den Luther zu sich fodern. (L. Opp. xvii. p. 587.)

² Da kam Bucer zu mit etlichen Reutern. (Ibid.)

³ Und wollte mir überreden zu Sickingen gen Ebernburg zu kommen. (Ibid.)

there were as many devils at Worms as there are tiles upon the roofs, I would enter it.”¹ . . . Never perhaps was Luther so great. The messenger returned to Worms, and there he related this confounding message. “I was then a fearless man,” said Luther a few days before his death; “I dreaded nothing. God can inspire a man with so much daring. I know not if at present I should have as much freedom and joy.”—“When the cause is good,” adds his disciple Mathesius, “the heart is enlarged, and gives courage and energy to evangelists and soldiers.”²

VIII. At last, on the morning of April 16th, Luther descried the walls of the ancient city. People were looking out for him there, and indeed there was but one engrossing thought in Worms. Bernard of Hirschfeld and Albert of Lindenau, young noblemen who could not restrain their impatience, with six cavaliers and other gentlemen, to the amount of a hundred, if we are to believe Pallavicini, went out to meet him on horseback and surrounded him, so that he might be well escorted at the moment of his entrance. He was now approaching. In advance of him the imperial usher rode a prancing steed, invested with all the insignia of his office. Then came Luther in his modest car, Jonas followed on horseback; the cavaliers surrounded him, and an immense crowd of people stood waiting before the gates. At ten o’clock he passed those walls, out of which so many predicted that he should never come again.

Two thousand persons accompanied the famous Wittemberg monk along the streets of the city. People eagerly pressed to meet him and the crowd every moment increased, so that at last it was much greater than it had been at the entrance of the emperor. “All at once,” as an historian tells us, “a man dressed in a singular fashion, and carrying a great cross before him, as was usual in funeral processions, came out from the crowd, advanced towards Luther, and then with the loud voice and the plaintive and monotonous recitative in which masses for the repose of the souls of the dead are sung, he chanted the

¹ Wenn so viel Teufel zu Worms wären, als Ziegel auf den Dächern, noch wollt Ich hinein! (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 587.

² So wächst das Herz im Leibe . . . (Math. p. 24.)

following words, as if he intended that the sound should seem to come from the empire of the dead.

Advenisti, O desiderabilis!
Quem expectabamus in tenebris."¹

Luther's arrival was celebrated by a *requiem*. If history informs us rightly, it was the court-fool of one of the dukes of Bavaria, who thus gave Luther one of those warnings, remarkable at once for shrewdness and for irony, of which so many examples have been related of those personages. But the shouts of the crowd soon over-powered the *de profundis* of the cross-bearer. The train advanced with difficulty through a sea of people. The herald of the empire stopt at last at the hotel of the knights of Rhodes—the same at which the elector's two counsellors, Frederick of Thun and Philip of Feilitsch, as also the marshal of the empire, Ulrich of Pappenheim, had their quarters. Luther alighted from his car, and as he stepped on the ground he said, "God will stand by me."² "I entered Worms in a covered car and in my frock," said he, afterwards. "Every one ran into the streets and wanted to see the monk Martin."³

The news of his arrival filled the elector of Saxony and Alexander with consternation. The young and elegant archbishop Albert, who held a kind of middle place between the two parties, was confounded at the daring boldness of such a step. "Had I had no more courage than him," said Luther, "it is true that I should never have been seen at Worms."

Forthwith Charles held a meeting of his privy council, and those members of it who enjoyed most of his confidence, hastened to the palace, urged thither by their fears. "And now that Luther is come," said Charles, "what are we to do?"

Modo, archbishop of Palermo and chancellor of Flanders, if we are to believe Luther's own testimony, replied: "We have long deliberated on this subject. Let your imperial majesty promptly rid yourself of this man. Did not Sigismond cause John Huss to be burnt? No one is bound either to give or to observe a safe-conduct in the case of a heretic."⁴—"No," said

¹ Thou hast come, O thou longed for one, whom we have been looking for in the shades! (M. Adam. Vita Lutheri, p. 118.)

² Deus stabit pro me. (Pallavicini, i. p. 114.)

³ L. Opp. xvii. p. 587.

⁴ Dass Ihre Majestät den Luther aufs erste boyseit thäte und umbringen liess. (Ibid. p. 587.)

Charles, "we must abide by our promises." The council accordingly had to resign itself to the necessity of the Reformer's making his appearance.

While the great were thus perplexing themselves about Luther in their council meetings, there were many men in Worms who were delighted at the opportunity they now enjoyed of at last beholding that illustrious servant of God. In the first rank among these stood Capito, chaplain and counsellor of the archbishop of Maintz. This remarkable person, who shortly before had been preaching the Gospel in Switzerland with much liberty,¹ believed that the position he then occupied called for his pursuing a course of conduct which subjected him to the charge of cowardice from the Evangelicals, and to that of dissimulation from the Romanists.² Nevertheless, he had preached the doctrine of faith with clearness at Maintz, and on his leaving that city, arranged that a young and very zealous preacher, named Hedio, should take his place. The Word of God was not bound in that city—the ancient seat of the primate of the German church. People there eagerly listened to the Gospel; in vain did the monks endeavour to preach holy Scripture in their own fashion, and employ all the means in their power to arrest the forward rush of men's minds; they failed in their attempt. But, while he preached the new doctrine withal,³ Capito strove to remain the friend of its persecutors, flattering himself with some others who shared his views, that he might thus be of great use to the Church. To hear them speak, one would have thought, that if Luther were not burnt and all the Lutherans excommunicated, it was solely to be ascribed to Capito's influence with the archbishop Albert.⁴ Cochlæus, dean of Frankfort, who had arrived at Worms nearly about the same time with Luther, went immediately to Capito. The latter, who was externally at least on excellent terms with Aleander, presented Cochlæus to him, and thus served as the connecting link between

¹ See the eighth book.

² *Astutia plus quam vulpina vehementer callidum . . . Lutherismum versutissime dissimulabat.* (Cochlæus, p. 36.)

³ *Evangelium audiunt avidissime, Verbum Dei alligatum non est . . .* (Caspar Hedio. *Zw. Epp.* p. 157.)

⁴ *Lutherus in hoc districtu dudum esset combustus, Lutherani ἀποσυνάγωγος, nisi Capito aliter persuassisset principi.* (Ibid. p. 148.)

the Reformer's two greatest enemies.¹ No doubt Capito thought that he might greatly serve the cause of Christ by keeping up all these appearances; but it cannot be asserted that any real advantage accrued from them. The event almost always disappoints the calculations of a wisdom purely human, and proves that a decided course, while it is the most candid, is also the most wise.

Meanwhile crowds continued to surround the hotel of Rhodes where Luther had alighted. In the eyes of some he was a prodigy of wisdom; in those of others, a monster of iniquity. The whole city was bent upon seeing him.² During the first part of the day, indeed, he was allowed to rest himself for a few hours and to converse with his most intimate friends, but hardly had evening set in when counts, barons, knights, men of noble rank, clergymen, and citizens flocked around him. All, not even his greatest enemies excepted, were struck with the boldness of his conduct, with the joy that seemed to animate him, the power with which he spoke, and with the imposing because lofty enthusiasm that invested this mere monk with an irresistible authority. But while some ascribed this immense superiority to something divine that there was about him, the pope's friends openly insisted that he was possessed of a devil.^{3 4} Luther was kept up until far on in the night, by an uninterrupted succession of visits from this crowd of persons who had come to satisfy their curiosity.

On the following morning, being that of Wednesday, the 17th of April, Ulrich of Pappenheim, hereditary marshal of the empire, summoned him to appear at four o'clock in the afternoon, before

¹ Hic (Capito) illum (Cochlœum) insinuavit Hieronymo Aleandro, nuntio Leonis X. (Cochlœus, p. 36.)

² Eadem die tota civitas solícite conflúxit. (Pallavicini, i. p. 114.)

³ Nescio quid divinum suspicantur; ex adverso alii, malo dæmone obsessum existimabant. (Pallavicini, i. p. 114.)

⁴ So was it once with the Saviour. Some ascribed his divine powers to the devil. Whenever people harden themselves against the truth, then have things the most divine no other effect upon them but that of hardening them still more. Yet this takes nothing from the truth, which clearly reveals itself to all who contemplate it with an unclouded eye. And to what but a full conviction of the same and to special support from God, can we ascribe Luther's cheerfulness, his composure, his cool deliberation, his firmness and courage, amid dangers so great, to which he willingly exposed himself, purely from a sense of duty, and which filled even the hearts of his friends with anguish on his account and almost made them stagger.—L. R.

his imperial majesty and the states of the empire. This message Luther received with profound respect.

Thus all was now settled, and Luther was about to appear before the most august assembly in the world. He had no lack of encouragements to cheer him. That excitable knight, Ulrich of Hutten, was then at Ebernburg. Not having it in his power to appear at Worms, for Leo X. had called upon Charles V. to send him bound, hand and feet, to Rome, he wished at least to hold out a friendly hand to Luther, and that same day, 17th April, he wrote to him in the words of the king of Israel:¹ *"The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee! Send thee help from the sanctuary and strengthen thee out of Zion! Grant thee according to thine own heart and fulfil all thy counsel! O my beloved Luther, my respected Father . . . fear not, be strong. The council of the wicked has beset you, they have opened their mouths upon you like roaring lions. But the Lord will rise up against the ungodly and will scatter them. Fight valiantly, then, for Christ. As for me I too will fight bravely. Would to God that I might see how they knit their brows. But the Lord will purge his vineyard which the wild-boar out of the forest hath wasted . . . May Christ preserve you!"* Bucer did what Hutten could not do; he came himself from Ebernburg to Worms and never left his friend during his whole stay there.²

But it was not to man that Luther looked for strength. "He who when assaulted by the enemy, holds out the shield of faith," said he one day, "is like Perseus holding the Gorgon's head. Whoever looked upon it died. Thus ought we to present the Son of God to the snares of the devil."³ On that morning of the 17th of April, he had his moments of disquiet, in which the face of God was hidden from him. His faith failed; his foes were multiplying before him; this preyed upon his imagination. . . . His soul became like a ship driven about in a storm, labouring amid the billows, going down into the depths and anon rising again towards heaven. In that hour of bitter

¹ David, Psalm xx.

² Bucerus eodem venit. (Mel. Adam. Vit. Bucer, p. 212.)

³ Also sollen wir den Sohn Gottes als Gorgonis Haupt . . . (L. Opp. (W.) xxii. 1659.)

grief in which he drank of Christ's cup—that hour which was to him like the garden of Gethsemane, he cast himself on the ground and gave utterance to those cries interrupted by sobs, which none can understand but such as can represent to themselves the depth of that anguish from which they went up unto God.¹ “Almighty, everlasting God! how terrible is this world! How it would open its jaws to devour me, and how weak is my trust in thee! . . . Oh but the flesh is weak and Satan is powerful! If my hopes are to repose in what is powerful in the eyes of the world, then it is all over with me! . . . The die is cast,² the sentence is pronounced. . . . O God! O God! . . . O thou my God! . . . be helpful to me against all the wisdom of this world! Do thou it; it is for thee alone to do it . . . for the work is not mine, but thine. I have nothing to bring me here, I have no controversy to maintain, not I, with these great ones of the earth! I, too, would like that my days should glide along happily and calmly. But the cause is thine . . . and it is righteous and eternal! O Lord, be helpful to me! Thou that art faithful, thou that art unchangeable! It is not in any man that I trust! That were vain indeed! All that is in man gives way; all that comes from man faileth. O God, O God, . . . dost thou not hear me? . . . My God, art thou dead? . . . No, thou canst not die! Thou only hidest thyself. Thou hast chosen me for this work, I know it! . . . Well then! be up and doing, O God! . . . Be thou upon my side, for the name of thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who is my defence, my shield and my fortress.”

After a few moments of silent conflict, he continued thus. “Lord, where dost thou rest? . . . Oh my God! where art thou? . . . Come, come, I am ready. . . . I am ready to forsake life for thy truth . . . patient as a lamb. For it is a righteous cause and it is thine own! . . . I will not go away from thee, neither now, nor throughout eternity! . . . And although the world should be full of demons, although my body, which nevertheless is the work of thine hands, should be doomed to bite the dust, to be stretched upon the rack, cut into pieces . . . consumed to ashes . . . my soul is thine!

¹ L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 589.)

² Die Glocke ist schon gegossen : the case is decided.

Yea, for this I have the assurance of thy Word. My soul is thine. It will abide near thee throughout everlasting ages . . . Amen! . . . O God, help thou me! . . . Amen!"^{1 2}

This prayer supplies a key to the understanding of Luther and the Reformation. Here history removes the veil from the sanctuary, and shows us the secret place where strength and courage were communicated to the humble and despised man who became God's instrument in giving freedom to the soul and thoughts of men, and in commencing a new era. Luther and the Reformation are here caught in the act. The secret of their power is laid bare. These utterances of a soul, while sacrificing itself in the cause of truth, are found in a collection of pieces relative to Luther's appearing at Worms, under number XVI., in the midst of safe conducts and other such documents. Some one or other of his friends, no doubt, had overheard him, and preserved them for us. In our opinion it constitutes one of the higher order of historical documents.

Four o'clock had now struck; the marshal of the empire presented himself; Luther must go, and he prepared to do so; God had heard him; his calmness had returned as he left the hotel. First walked the usher, after him the marshal of the empire, and then the Reformer. The crowd in the streets was even greater than during the evening before, so that to advance through it was impossible. It was vain to call on the people to make way; the crowding increased instead of diminishing. Perceiving, at last, that it was impossible to reach the city hall in

¹ Die Seele ist dein. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 589.

² The intervening struggle, as the critical moment drew near, is by no means to be wondered at. God puts the seal to the divine nature of the work undertaken by Luther. He relied not on his own strength. He did not recklessly cast himself into the most manifest perils. He fully apprehended what became his position, and the impossibility of his escaping from it, by means of human help, unskaited. He was not insensible to his own preservation, and stood exposed to the fiery darts of the wicked, who, as the crisis approached, would have had him waver, and herein he was conformed to his Lord, who in Gethsemane felt the keenest anguish. Even as he did then, he held fast by his God and employed the best weapons for overcoming in such a conflict. His prayer was not offered in vain. He was strengthened thereby to commit himself entirely to the hands of God. The calm returned, and just at the requisite moment was his God nigh to him, and on his entering the Diet, disposed matters, as the sequel informs us, on the side whence he had not expected it, so as was most powerfully fitted to banish from his mind all remaining fear. This is most intelligible to those who are used to the ways of God, and who are always conversant with trials, although these may be of a minor description.—L. R.

the usual way, the usher demanded a passage through private houses, and thus conducted Luther along gardens and back ways,¹ until they reached the place where the Diet met. The people, on discovering this, threw themselves into the houses, and pressed hard on the steps of the monk of Wittenberg; they posted themselves at the windows that looked into the gardens, and a great many persons mounted on the roofs. The ridges of the roofs, the pavement of the streets, above, below, all was covered with spectators.²

Even after they had reached the city hall, Luther, and those who were with him, met with a new obstacle in being unable to reach the door, on account of the pressure from the crowd. "Make way, make way," was shouted to no purpose; no one would stir, until at length the imperial soldiers forced a passage, and Luther entered. The people would have rushed in after him but that the soldiers interposed with their halberts. Luther reached the interior of the building, but there, too, there was a crowd of people, occupying the antichambers, and at the windows, to the number of above five thousand spectators, consisting of Germans, Italians, Spaniards, and others. Luther could with difficulty move forward. At last, as he drew near the door by which he was to pass into the immediate presence of his judges, he met a valiant knight, the celebrated general George of Friendsberg; the same who four years after, at the head of the German foot, knelt with his fellow soldiers on the field of Pavia, and then dashing himself on the left of the French army, threw it into the Tesino, and in a great measure decided the captivity of the king of France. The old general, on seeing Luther pass, tapping him on the shoulder, and shaking a head that had grown white in battles, he said in a kindly tone; "Little monk, little monk, you have before you a march and an encounter such as neither I, nor any other captains have seen the like of, in the bloodiest of our campaigns! But if your cause be just, and if you have the assurance of its being so, go forward in the name of God, and dread nought! God will not forsake you!"³ A

¹ Und ward also durch heimlich Gänge geführt. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 574.)

² Doch lief das Volk häufig zu, und stieg sogar auf Dächer. (Seckend. 348.)

³ Münchlein, Münchlein, du gehest jetzt einem Gang, einen solchen Stand zu thun, dergleichen Ich und mancher Obrister, auch in unzer allerernestester Schlacht-Ordnung nicht gethan haben. . . . (Seckend. 348.)

noble tribute paid by the courage of the sword to the courage of the mind. *He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city,*¹ is the saying of a king.

At last the doors of the hall were thrown open. Luther entered, and with him many persons who formed no part of the Diet. Never did man appear before a more august assembly. The emperor Charles V. whose kingdoms had the ascendancy both in the old and in the new world; the archduke Ferdinand, his brother; six electors of the empire, whose descendants at the present day almost all wear kingly crowns; eighty dukes, the greater number of whom ruled over more or less extensive territories, and among whom there were some whose names were afterwards to become formidable to the Reformation, the duke of Alva, and his two sons; eight margraves, thirty archbishops, bishops, or prelates, seven ambassadors, among which were those of the kings of France and England; the deputies from ten free cities, a great many princes, counts, and barons exercising sovereign jurisdiction on their estates; the pope's nuncios, altogether amounting to two hundred and four personages: such was the imposing court before which Martin Luther appeared.

This very compearance amounted to a striking victory gained over the popedom. The man that stood before them was condemned by the pope, and yet was summoned to appear before a tribunal which, by so doing, placed itself above the pope. Although the pope by his interdict, had decreed his separation from all human society, he had been summoned in honourable terms, and admitted into the presence of the most august assembly in the world. The pope had ordained that his mouth should be for ever shut, and he was about to open it before thousands of auditors, convened from the remotest dwelling-places of Christendom. Thus through Luther's instrumentality, an immense revolution had taken place. Already had Rome come down from her throne, and that at the voice of a monk.

Some of the princes, perceiving the humble son of the Mansfeldt miner disconcerted at the sight of this assemblage of kings, kindly went up to him, and one of them said to him: "*Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul.*" Another even added: "*When ye shall be brought before kings, the Spirit of*

¹ Proverbs xvi. 32

your Father will speak in you."¹ Thus by the mouths of the mighty ones of this world did his Master's words comfort the Reformer.²

During this time the guards had been clearing a passage for Luther, who could now step forward until he stood before the throne of Charles V. All eyes were now turned towards him; the hubbub began to subside, and was succeeded at length by perfect stillness. "Say nothing," said the marshal of the empire to him, "until you are interrogated," and then left him.

IX. After a short and solemn pause, John of Eck, chancellor of the archbishop of Treves, and a friend of Aleander's, but whom the reader must carefully distinguish from the divine of that name, rose and said in a loud and distinct voice, first in Latin, then in German: "Martin Luther, his sacred and invincible imperial majesty hath summoned thee before his throne, in pursuance of the counsel and advice of the states of the holy Roman empire, in order that thou mayest be charged to reply to the following two questions: 'First, dost thou acknowledge that these books were composed by thee?' The speaker at the same time pointed with his finger to about twenty publications that had been laid upon a table in the middle of the hall, and before where Luther stood. "I did not well know how they had come to possess them," said Luther afterwards in relating this circumstance. Aleander had set himself to collect them. "Secondly," continued the chancellor, "dost thou wish to retract these books and their contents, or dost thou now persist in the things thou hast therein advanced?"

Luther was about to reply, without any misgivings, to the first of these questions, in the affirmative, when his counsel, Jerome Schurff, promptly interposing, called aloud, "Let the titles of the books be read."³

The chancellor went up to the table and read the titles.

¹ Einige aus denen Reichs-Gliedern sprachen Ihm einen Muth, mit Christi Worten, ein. . . . (Matth. x. 20, 28; Seckend. p. 348.)

² How seasonable was not this address, even as that previously mentioned from General Von Freundsberg! This belongs to that order of things, wherein the leading of God may be remarked, and which, compared with the state of mind which Luther very shortly before experienced, and which apparently was not entirely removed, plainly showed that God was with him, and at the fitting time sent His angels to strengthen him, though by the ministry of men—L. R.

³ Legantur tituli librorum! (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 588.)

Among the rest there were several devotional works, that had no reference to controversy.

On the books being enumerated, Luther spoke as follows, first in Latin, and afterwards in German

“Most Gracious Emperor, Gracious Princes and Lords!

“His Imperial Majesty addresses two questions to me.

“With regard to the first, I acknowledge the books enumerated to have been from me; I cannot disown them.

“As for the second; seeing that it is a question that relates to the faith and the salvation of souls, and in which the Word of God has an interest, that is to say, the most precious treasure that there is in heaven or upon the earth,¹ I should act imprudently were I to reply inconsiderately. I might affirm less than the case requires or more than truth exacts, and thus make myself offend against that Word of Christ: *Whosoever will deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.* Wherefore I beseech your imperial majesty, with all submission, to allow me time, that I may reply without doing prejudice to the Word of God.”

Far from indicating anything like hesitation on Luther's part, this answer was worthy both of the Reformer and of the assembly. In a matter of such gravity he behaved to be calm and circumspect, and to put far away from him the slightest suspicion of being under the influence of passion or frivolity; besides, that by speaking out at the fitting time he would better prove the inflexible firmness of his resolution. History presents us with many examples of men, who by too much promptitude of speech, have brought great evils upon themselves, and upon the world. But here Luther reined in his naturally impetuous character; he restrained his tongue, ever ready to speak out; he checked himself just as the feelings that animated him would fain have revealed themselves. This self-command and composure, so surprising in such a man, multiplied his moral power a hundred-fold, and put him into a condition to answer at a later stage, with a wisdom and a dignity that was to disappoint the expectations of his adversaries, and disconcert their malice and their pride.²

¹ Weil dies eine Frage vom Glauben und der Seelen Seligkeit ist, und Gottes Wort belanget. . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 573.)

² Here, too, is God's working visible; while against his usual disposition,

Nevertheless, as he had spoken in a tone of respect, many thought that he had begun to waver, and Charles's counsellors cheered themselves with a gleam of hope. Charles himself, eager to scan the man whose eloquence was throwing the nation into commotion, had never taken his eyes from off him; but now he turned towards one of his courtiers, and said with an air of disdain: "Assuredly, this is not the man who will ever make me an heretic."¹ Then, rising from his throne, the young emperor retired with his ministers into a council chamber, while the electors shut themselves into another, and the deputies from the free cities into a third. The Diet having then re-constituted itself, it was agreed that Luther's request should be granted—a decision that quite disconcerted the more violent.

"Martin Luther," said the chancellor of Treves, "his imperial Majesty, with the kindness that is natural to him, consents to your having one day more, but upon the condition that you answer by word of mouth and not in writing."

Thereupon the imperial usher stepped forward and re-conducted Luther to his hotel. Threats and shouts of joy rent the air by turns, as he passed along. The most sinister reports began to circulate among Luther's friends. "The Diet is dissatisfied," it was said, "the nuncios are exulting, and the Reformer will be sacrificed." Men's passions began to chafe, and many persons of noble blood ran to see Luther. "Mr. Doctor," said they, "how go matters now? We are assured that they are going to burn you."² . . . That wont be the case," said those knights, "without their paying for it with their lives!"—"And this actually happened," said Luther, referring to these words at Eisleben, twenty years afterwards.

On the other side Luther's enemies were triumphing over what had taken place. "He has applied for time," they said, "and he will retract. When at a distance he spoke with arrogance,

which inclined to violence, and thus might easily have led him to speak unadvisedly, Luther here displayed exemplary circumspection and meek discretion, which were not the less coupled with wisdom and force, so that in these hazardous moments he was almost conformed to his Lord when he stood before his judges. Yet it was not through his own power or capacity that Luther thus spoke and acted: it was the Lord himself that was with him.—L. R.

¹ Hic certe nunquam efficeret ut hæreticus evaderem. (Pallavicini, i. p. 115.)

² Wie geht's? man sagt sie wollen euch verbrennen. . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 588.)

but now his courage fails him. . . . He is a vanquished man."

Luther was perhaps the only person in Worms who felt at ease. A few moments after returning from the Diet, he wrote to the imperial counsellor, Cuspianus, as follows: "I write to you in the midst of tumult," (referring probably to the shouting of the crowd that surrounded his hotel,) "this very hour I have been in the presence of the emperor and his brother.¹ I have acknowledged myself to be the author of my books, and have declared that I will answer to morrow in regard to retracting. I will not retract the stroke of a letter of all my works, Christ being my helper."²

The excitement that prevailed among the people and foreign soldiery was now increasing from hour to hour, so that while the different parties were proceeding calmly in the Diet, they were coming to blows in the streets. The Spanish soldiers, proud and pitiless, offended the burgesses of the city by their impudence. One of these satellites of Charles's, finding in a book-shop the pope's bull published by Hutten, with a commentary by that knight, he took and tore it into pieces, and then throwing away the fragments, trampled them under foot. Others, on discovering some copies of Luther's work *on the Babylonish captivity*, carried them off, and tore them to shreds, whereupon the people rose with indignation, threw themselves on the soldiers, and put them to flight. In a third case, a mounted Spaniard with his drawn sword pursued through the streets a German, who fled from him, and the people were too much frightened to oppose this furious foreigner.³

Some political persons thought they had found out a device for saving Luther. "Retract," said they to him, "your doctrinal errors, but persist in all that you have said against the pope and his court, and you are saved." Aleander gnashed his teeth at such advice. But Luther was not to be shaken from his purpose, and declared that he cared little about a political Reformation, if it were not founded on the faith.

When the 18th of April had arrived, Glapio, the chancellor

¹ Hac hora coram Cæsare et fratre romano constitui. ('L. Epp. i. p. 587.)

² Verum ego ne apicem quidem revocabo. (Ibid.)

³ Kappens Ref. Urkunden, ii. p. 448.

Von Eck, and Aleander held an early meeting according to orders from Charles V. for the purpose of arranging in what manner they should proceed with respect to Luther.

As for Luther, he set himself to compose his thoughts. He possessed that peace of soul without which man is incapable of doing anything great. He prayed; he read the Word of God; he ran through his own writings and endeavoured to throw his answer into a proper shape. The very thought that he was about to bear testimony to Jesus Christ and to his Word in presence of the emperor and of the empire, filled his heart with joy. The moment when he was to appear being not far off, he went up to the holy Scriptures with deep emotion as they lay open on his table, placed his left hand on them and raising his right hand to God, he swore that he would remain faithful to the Gospel and make a free confession of his faith, even though he might have to seal that confession with his blood. After this, he felt his mind still more at peace.

At four o'clock the usher presented himself and conducted him to the place where the Diet held its sittings. The general curiosity was now the more intense inasmuch as the answer was to be decisive. The Diet being occupied at the time, Luther had to wait in the court in the midst of an immense crowd which heaved to and fro like the sea in a storm, and pressed on the Reformer with its waves. The Wittenberg doctor had to spend two long hours in the midst of a multitude eager to have a sight of him. "I was not accustomed to all this fuss and bustle,"¹ said he, and a sad preparation it would, indeed, have been for an ordinary man. But Luther was with God. His look was serene; his features were unruffled; the Lord had set him upon a rock. Night was now drawing on; torches were lighted in the hall where the Diet was met; and their dusky radiance shone through the antique stained-glass windows into the court. All things assumed a solemn aspect. At last the doctor was introduced, followed by many persons who, in their anxiety to hear his answer, crowded in along with him. The princes having taken their places, and Luther finding himself anew in the presence of

¹ Des Getummels und Wesens war Ich gar nicht gewohnt. (L. Opp. xvii. p. 588, 535.)

Charles V., the chancellor of the elector of Treves rose and spoke thus:

"Martin Luther, you asked yesterday for a delay which is now expired. It ought not unquestionably to have been granted you, since every man should be sufficiently instructed in the things of the faith, to be ready to render an account thereof to all who may ask it; and especially thou who art so great and able a doctor of holy Scriptures. . . . Now, then, answer to his majesty's requirement after his having dealt with thee so tenderly. Dost thou desire to defend thy books as a whole, or dost thou wish to retract ought thereof?"

After saying this in Latin, the chancellor repeated it in German.

"Whereupon Dr. Martin Luther," say the minutes of the Diet of Worms, "replied in the humblest and most submissive manner. He did not shout nor express himself in a violent tone, but with candour, mildness, propriety and modesty, and yet with much Christian cheerfulness and firmness."¹

"Most serene emperor! illustrious princes, gracious lords!" said Luther, looking to Charles and to the assembly, "I humbly present myself in your presence this day in compliance with the order of yesterday, and by the mercies of God I conjure your majesty and your august highnesses, to listen with candour to the defence of a cause which, I am most sure, is just and true. If through my ignorance, I shall be found wanting in the usages and proprieties of courts, you will forgive me, seeing I was not brought up in king's palaces, but in the obscurity of a cloister.

"Two things were required of me yesterday on the part of his imperial majesty: First, Whether I was the author of the books whose titles were read; Secondly, Whether I would revoke or defend the doctrine therein taught. I answered to the former of these questions and now abide by that answer.

"As to the latter, I have composed books upon widely different subjects. In some I have treated of faith and of good works, in a manner at once so pure, so simple, and so Christian, that

¹ Schreyt nicht sehr noch heftig, sondern redet fein, sittlich, zuchtig und bescheiden. (L. Opp. (L.) xv. p. 576.)

my very adversaries, far from finding ought therein to reprehend, admit that those works are useful and worthy of being read by pious hearts. The bull itself of the pope, violent as it is, owns this. Were I then to retract these, what should I be doing? Wretched man! I alone of all men should abandon truths which friends and enemies alike unanimously approve, and should oppose what all the world glories in confessing.

“In the second place, I have composed books against the popedom, and therein I have attacked those who by false doctrine, wicked lives, and scandalous examples, desolate the Christian world and ruin souls and bodies. Is not this substantiated by the complaints of God-fearing men? Is it not evident that the human laws and doctrines of the popes, entangle, torment, and martyrise the consciences of the faithful, while the crying and never-ending extortions of Rome, swallow up the property and the wealth of Christendom, and of this most illustrious nation in particular?

“Were I to revoke what I have written on this subject, what should I be doing . . . if not strengthening that tyranny and opening a still wider door to impieties at once so many and so great?¹ These evils would then overflow more furiously than ever, and those haughty men would be seen ever more and more increasing in number, and violence, and insolence. And not only would the yoke that oppresses the Christian people become more grievous through my retraction; it would, so to speak, become more legitimate, for by that very retraction it would have received the sanction of your serene majesty and of all the estates of the holy empire. Great God! I should then prove like an infamous cloak, destined to cover over and conceal every kind of wickedness and tyranny!

“Finally, in the third place, I have written books against private persons who have wanted to defend the Roman tyranny and to destroy the faith. I frankly confess that I have possibly attacked them with more acrimony than became my ecclesiastical profession. I do not look upon myself as a saint, but not the more on that account can I retract my books, for I should

¹ Nicht allein die Fenster, sondern auch Thür und Thor aufthäte. (L. Opp (L.) xvii. p. 573.)

thus sanction the impieties of my opponents, and furnish them with occasion to crush the people of God still more cruelly.

“Meanwhile I am a mere man, and not God; I will therefore defend myself as did Jesus Christ. *If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil*, (John xviii, 23.) said he. How much more ought not I, who am but dust and ashes, and who am so liable to err, to desire that each should state what he has to say against my doctrine?

“Therefore do I conjure you by the mercies of God, thou most serene emperor, and ye most illustrious princes, and every man, be he who he may, whether he belong to a higher or a lower rank, to prove to me by the writings of the prophets and apostles that I am mistaken. From the moment that I shall have been convinced of this I will forthwith retract all my errors, and will be the first to seize my writings and to cast them into the flames.¹

“What I have just said clearly shows, I think, that I have well weighed and considered the perils to which I expose myself, but, far from being daunted by these, it is matter of great joy to me, to perceive that the Gospel is at this day, as in former times, a cause of trouble and of discord. Such is the character and the destiny of the Word of God. *I am not come to send peace upon the earth but a sword*, Jesus Christ hath said, (Mat. x. 34.) God is to be admired and to be feared in his counsels; let us fear lest, in setting ourselves to check dissensions, we persecute the holy Word of God, and bring down upon our heads a frightful deluge of insurmountable dangers, present disasters, and everlasting desolations . . . Let us fear lest the reign of that young and noble prince, the emperor Charles, on whom, under God, we found such high expectations, not only should commence, but further, continue and end under the most dismal auspices. I might adduce examples drawn from the oracles of God,” continued Luther speaking with a most noble courage; in the presence of the greatest monarch in the world, “I might

¹ What an honest and well-advised address was this on the part of Luther. No, it was no obstinate adhesion to what he may have once imprudently or inconsiderately spoken or done, but love for the truth alone was his motive. We should not be ashamed to retract whatever can be demonstrated to be wrong or ill-founded. But the truth he neither can nor will abandon.—L. R.

speak to you of the Pharaohs, of the kings of Babylon and of those of Israel, who never laboured more effectually for their own ruin than when they thought to strengthen their empire by counsels apparently most wise. *God removeth the mountains and they know not; he overturneth them in his anger.* (Job ix. 5.)

"If I say these things, it is not that I think that such mighty princes have any need of my poor counsels, but it is because I wish to render to Germany what she has a right to claim from her children. Thus, in commending myself to your august majesty, and to your most serene highnesses, I humbly beseech you not to allow the hatred of my enemies to launch forth an indignation against me which I have not deserved."¹

Luther pronounced what he said in German, with modesty, yet also with much warmth and firmness;² he was ordered to repeat the same in Latin, the emperor not liking the German tongue. The imposing assemblage that surrounded the Reformer, together with the noise and excitement, had fatigued him. "I was all in a sweat," said he, "heated by the tumult and obliged to stand in the midst of the princes." Frederick of Thun, a confidential councillor of the elector of Saxony, having been posted by his master's orders at the Reformer's side, in order to guard him against surprise or violence, perceiving the sad condition of the poor monk, said to him: "If you cannot repeat your discourse, it is enough, Mr. Doctor." But Luther, after pausing for a moment to take breath, again spoke, pronouncing his discourse in Latin with the same energy as before.³

"This was extremely gratifying to the elector Frederick," the Reformer tells us.

As soon as he had ended, the chancellor of Treves, who acted as spokesman to the Diet, said to him with indignation: "You have not answered the question that was addressed to you. You do not stand here to throw doubts on the decisions of councils. You are required to give a clear and precise answer. Do you, or do you not, choose to retract? Upon this Luther answered without flinching: "Since your most serene Majesty and your

¹ This discourse, together with all the words we quote, is taken textually from authentic documents. See L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 776—780.

² Non clamose at modeste, non tamen sine christiana animositate et constantia. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 165.)

³ See L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 165—167.

high mightinesses, require me to give a simple, clear, and precise reply, such will I give:¹ I cannot submit my faith either to the pope, or to councils, inasmuch as it is clear as daylight that these have often fallen into error, and even into gross contradictions with themselves. If, then, I be not convinced by testimonies from Scripture, or by evident reasons, if people cannot persuade me by the very passages that I have quoted, and if they fail thus to render my conscience a captive of the Word of God, *I neither can nor will retract anything*, for it is unsafe for the Christian to say anything against his conscience." Then, steadily contemplating the assembly before which he stood, and which held his life in their hands: "Here I stand," said he, "I CAN DO NO OTHERWISE; GOD HELP ME! AMEN."²

Thus did Luther, constrained to obey his faith, dragged by his conscience to death, oppressed by the noblest necessity, a slave to his creed, and in that creed supremely free, like a ship in the midst of a frightful tempest, which in order to save something more precious than itself, knowingly dashes itself against a rock, utter those sublime words which, even at the distance of three centuries, still thrill within us; thus spoke a friar before the emperor and the greatest men of the nation; and that man, weak and despised, alone, yet aided by the grace of the Most High, seemed to be greater and more powerful than them all. His words have an energy, in opposing which all these mighty ones have to confess their impotence. In this we see that weakness of God which is stronger than men. The empire and the church on the one hand, and an obscure man on the other, have met face to face. God had assembled these princes and prelates that public evidence might be given that their wisdom was nought. The battle was lost; and the consequences of that defeat of the mighty of the earth, were to make themselves felt among all nations and in all future ages.

The meeting remained fixt in amazement. Many of the princes could hardly conceal their admiration. The emperor, recovering from the impression first made on him, exclaimed: "The monk speaks undauntedly, and with a confident spirit."³

¹ Dabo illud neque dentatum, neque cornutum. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 166.)

² Hier stehe ich : Ich kann nicht anders : Gott helfe mir. Amen. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 580.)

³ Der Mönch redet unerschrocken, mit getrostem Muth! (Seckend. 350.)

The Spaniards and Italians alone were disconcerted, and ere long they made a jest of a greatness of soul which they could not comprehend.

"If thou dost not retract," rejoined the chancellor when the meeting had recovered from the impression produced by the address they had heard, "the emperor and the states of the empire will see what course they ought to adopt towards an obstinate heretic." Luther's friends shuddered at this; but the monk repeated: "God help me, for I can retract nothing."¹

Luther then withdrew, and the princes proceeded to deliberate. Each could perceive that it was a critical moment for Christendom. The yea or nay of this monk, was to decide, perhaps for ages, the repose of the Church and of the world. An attempt had been made to frighten him, but he had only been raised upon a tribunal in presence of the nation; people thought they were giving greater publicity to his defeat, but they had only enhanced his victory. The partisans of Rome could not make up their minds to submit to being so humbled. Luther was called back and the spokesman said to him: "Martin, thou hast not spoken with the modesty befitting thy person. The distinction thou hast made with regard to thy books, is a useless one; for shouldst thou retract such as contain errors, the emperor will not suffer the others to be burnt. It is an extravagant request, thy asking to be refuted by Scripture, when thou art reviving heresies that have been condemned by the general council of Constance. The emperor, therefore, ordains thee to say simply, by a yea or nay, if thou dost resolve to maintain what thou hast advanced, or if thou dost wish to retract a part thereof?"—"I have no other answer to make than what I have already made," replied Luther calmly. It was enough. Firm as a rock, all the waves of human power dash themselves against him in vain. The energy of his utterance, his dauntless expression, his flashing eyes, and the imperturbable firmness that revealed itself in the rude lines of his German features, produced the most profound impression on that illustrious assembly. All hope was gone for ever now. Spaniards, Belgians, the very Romans themselves, were struck dumb. The monk had van-

¹ L. Opp. (W.) xv. 2235.

quished those great ones of the earth. He had said No to the Church and to the empire. Charles V. rose, and the whole meeting rose along with him: the chancellor announcing, in a loud voice, "the Diet will meet to-morrow morning to receive the opinion of the emperor."

X. It was now night. Each had to find his way to his residence in the dark. Luther had an escort of two imperial officers given him. Some supposed that his doom had been decreed, that they were conducting him to prison, and that he would come out of it, only to go to the stake. An immense tumult arose. Several persons of noble family shouted: "Is he going to prison?"—"No," replied Luther, "they are accompanying me to my hotel." These words had a quieting effect. It was now that the Spaniards who were attached to the emperor's household, followed the audacious monk with hisses and jeers¹ all along the streets he had to traverse, whilst others howled and yelled like wild beasts deprived of their prey. But Luther retained all his firmness and composure.

Such was the scene at Worms. This intrepid monk who up to that time had with no small audacity braved all his enemies, spoke during that hour in the face of those who were thirsting for his blood, with calmness, dignity, and humility. There was no exaggeration, no human enthusiasm, no angry passion; in the midst of the most lively emotions, he was in peace; modest in resisting the powers of this world; great in the presence of all its majesties. In this we have irrefragable evidence that Luther was then acting in obedience to God, not according to the suggestions of pride. There was in the hall at Worms one that was greater than either Luther or Charles.

*When ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles; take no thought how or what ye shall speak, Jesus Christ has said: For it is not ye that speak.*² Never, perhaps, was this promise so manifestly fulfilled.

A profound impression had been made on the leading men of

¹ Subsannatione hominem Dei et longo rugitu prosecuti sunt. (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 166.)

² Gospel according to St. Matthew, chap. x. 18, 20. I have kept closer to the words of the text than M. Merle d'Aubigné, whose paraphrases sound harsh to British ears. TR.

the empire; this Luther had observed, and his courage was confirmed by it. The pope's servants were angry with John Von Eck for not having sooner interrupted the guilty monk. Several princes and lords were gained over to a cause which was sustained by such a firm conviction of its truth; and although with some, indeed, the impression wore off, others, on the contrary, though they concealed it then, manifested it afterwards with great courage.¹

Luther had returned to his hotel, and was reposing his weary body, after the fatigue of so rude an assault. Spalatin and other friends surrounded him, and all joined in praising God. While thus engaged, a footman entered, bearing a silver vase filled with Eimbeck beer. "My master," said he, presenting it to Luther, "invites you to refresh yourself with this drink."—"What prince is it," said the Wittemberg doctor, "who so graciously bethinks himself about me?" It was the old duke Erick of Brunswick. This offering from so powerful a lord and one, too, who belonged to the pope's party, affected Luther. "His highness," continued the servant, "was pleased to taste it himself before sending it to you." Luther then allayed his thirst by pouring out some of the duke's beer for himself, and after drinking it, said: "As duke Erick has this day remembered me, so may our Lord Jesus Christ remember him in the hour of his last conflict."² The present was a small matter; but Luther, wishing to give a token of his gratitude to the prince that thought of him at such a moment, gave him all that he had to give, a prayer. The servant went with this message to his master. The old duke called to mind these words on his death-bed, and addressing a young page, Francis von Kramm, as he stood by his bedside, he said, "Take the Gospel, and read to me." The boy read those words of

¹ And so must the remembrance of this great event make the same impression upon us. We owe M. MERLE the most heartfelt gratitude for having depicted it to us so much to the life, and, above all, ought we to be thankful to God who has bestowed on him the most admirable endowments for doing justice to the task. It is very possible that he relates to us nothing but what may be read elsewhere, and is drawn from credible sources: truly otherwise he would have given us a work of fiction—not a history. But here all is so well put together, so natural, so simple, too, without far-fetched expressions, that verily they must be men without a soul, or stubbornly prepossessed against the truth, whether they be of the Roman Catholics or so called enlightened Protestants, who perceive nothing here but French glibness of speech.—L. R.

² Also gedencke seiner unser Herr Christ in seinem letzten Kampff. (Seck. 354.)

Christ: Whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water in my name, because ye belong to Christ, the Saviour hath said, verily I say unto you, he shall have his reward.

Hardly had the duke of Brunswick's valet gone out, when a messenger arrived from the elector of Saxony, commanding Spalatin's immediate attendance on him. Frederick had come to the Diet in great perplexity, believing that in the emperor's presence Luther would find his courage vanish. No wonder, then, that the Reformer's firmness deeply affected him. When the chaplain arrived the table was laid; the elector was about to sup with his court, and already the basin was brought in for the guests to wash their hands. Seeing Spalatin enter, the elector beckoned to him to follow while he went to his bed-chamber, and there, while alone with him, he said with profound emotion: "Oh how father Luther has spoken before the emperor and before all the states of the empire! I only tremble lest he may have been too bold."¹ Frederick then fully resolved to protect the doctor more courageously in future.

Aleander could not fail to perceive the impression that Luther had produced; he saw that now there was no time to be lost, and that the young emperor must be urged to adopt vigorous measures. The season was favourable, war with France being imminent. Leo X. desirous of aggrandising his states, and caring little about the peace of Christendom, had caused two treaties to be secretly negotiated at the same time; the one with Charles against Francis, the other with Francis against Charles.² By the one he demanded for himself from the emperor Parma, Placentia, and Ferrara; by the other, he claimed restitution from the king of a part of the kingdom of Naples, which would thus be taken from Charles. The latter perceived the importance of gaining over Leo to his interests, in order that he might have him as an ally against his rival, the king of France; and the price seemed small when the friendship of the mighty pontiff might be bought by sacrificing Luther.

On the day following Luther's appearance, being Friday, April

¹ O, wie schön hat Pater Martinus geredet. (Seck. p. 355.)

² Guicciardini L. xiv. p. 175. Dumont. Corp. dipl. T. iv. p. 96.—Dicesi del papa Leone, che quando l'aveva fatto lega con alcuno, prima soleva dir che pero non si doveva restar de tratar cum lo altro principe opposto. (Suriano, Venetian ambassador at Rome, M. S. C. Archives of Venice.)

19th, the emperor caused a message, written in French with his own hand, to be read to the Diet.¹ "Descended," said he, "from the Christian emperors of Germany, from the catholic kings of Spain, from the archdukes of Austria, the dukes of Burgundy, all of them illustrious as defenders of the Roman faith, I am firmly resolved to follow the example of my forefathers. A single monk, led astray by his own folly, rises against the faith of Christendom. I will sacrifice my kingdoms, my power, my friends, my treasures, my body, my blood, my spirit, and my life in putting a stop to this impiety.² I am about to send back the Augustinian, Martin Luther, forbidding him meanwhile to cause the least tumult among the people; I will then proceed against him and his adherents, as against manifest heretics, by excommunication, by interdict, and by all means fitted to ruin them.³ I call upon the members of the states to conduct themselves like faithful Christians."

This address was not universally acceptable. Young and passionate, Charles had departed from ordinary forms; he ought first to have asked the advice of the Diet. Two extreme opinions forthwith were expressed. The creatures of the pope, the elector of Brandenburg, and several ecclesiastical princes, insisted that no respect should be paid to the safe-conduct that had been granted to Luther.⁴ "The Rhine," they said, "ought to receive his ashes as it received, a century ago, those of John Huss." Charles, if we are to believe an historian, bitterly repented afterwards of not having followed this dastardly advice. "I confess," said he towards the close of life, "that I committed a great fault, in allowing Luther to live. I was under no obligation to keep my promise to him, that heretic having offended a greater master than me, even God himself. I could, I even ought to have forgotten my promise, and to have revenged the insults he had done to God: it is from my not having seen to his death that heresy has never ceased to make progress. His death would have crushed it in its cradle."⁵

¹ Autographum in lingua Burgandicâ ab ipso met enarratum. (Cochlæus, 32.)

² Regna, thesauros, amicos, corpus, sanguinem, vitam, spiritumque profundere. (Fallav. i. p. 118.)

³ Und andern Wegen sie zu vertilgen. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 581.)

⁴ Dass Luthero das sichere Geleit nicht möchte gehalten worden. (Seckend. p. 357.)

⁵ Sandoval: *Hist. de Carlos V.* quoted in Llorente's *Hist. de l'Inquisition*,

So horrible a proposal as this filled the elector and all Luther's friends with dismay. "The execution of John Huss," said the elector palatine, "caused too many calamities to break out upon the German nation, to allow us to dream of having a stake prepared for any such purpose again."—"The princes of Germany," exclaimed even George of Saxony, Luther's irreconcilable enemy, "will not permit a safe-conduct to be violated. This, the first Diet that has been held by our new emperor, will not render itself guilty of so shameful an action. Such perfidy does not accord with the ancient German probity." The princes of Bavaria, devoted as they were to the church of Rome, supported this protestation. Thus the scene of death which had scared the minds of Luther's friends, seemed to be removed to a distance.

The report of these discussions, which lasted two days, spread through the city. Party spirit ran high. Those men of noble family who espoused the Reformation, began to speak firmly against the treachery required by Aleander. "The emperor," said they, "is a young man, whom the papists and bishops, by their flatteries, induce to act as they please."¹ Pallavicini makes mention of four hundred nobles who were prepared to make good by their swords the safe-conduct that had been granted to Luther. On Saturday morning placards were found attached to the house doors and public places; some against Luther, and others in his favour. On one of these there was simply placed the energetic words of the preacher: "Wo to thee, O land, whose king is a child." Seeking, it was said, had collected many knights and soldiers behind the impregnable ramparts of his fortress, at the distance of some leagues from Worms, and waited only to know what was to be the issue of the affair before he proceeded to act. The enthusiasm of the people, not only in Worms but even in the most remote cities of the empire,² the fearless valour of the

i. p. 57. According to Llorente, the supposition that Charles, towards the close of his life, inclined to evangelical sentiments, is a mere invention of Protestants and of the enemies of Philip II. This question is an historical problem which the numerous citations of Llorente seem unhappily to resolve completely according to his opinion.

¹ Eum esse puerum, qui nutu et blanditiis Papistarum et Episcoporum tranatur quocunque velint. (Cochlæus, p. 33.)

² Verum etiam in longinquis Germaniæ civitatibus, molus et marmura plebium. (Ibid.)

knights, the personal attachment which several of the princes bore towards the Reformer, everything, in short, must have made Charles and the Diet sensible that the course required by the Romans might compromise the supreme authority, stir up revolts, and even convulse the empire.¹ It was a mere monk whom they deliberated about burning; but not even all the princes and partisans of Rome could muster sufficient courage to do it. Nor can we doubt that Charles V., who was then a youth, still dreaded perjury—a supposition confirmed by the words, if truly reported, which some historians inform us that he uttered on this occasion: “Though honesty and good faith were banished from the whole universe, they ought to find an asylum in the heart of princes.” It is sad to think that he may have forgotten this while approaching the grave. Furthermore, other motives may possibly have influenced the emperor. The Florentine Vettori, the friend of Leo X. and of Machiavel, alleges that Charles spared Luther, only that thus he might better hold the pope in check.²

At the sitting held on Saturday, the violent counsels of Alexander were set aside. Luther was an object of affection; a desire was felt to save the life of a man of such simplicity of character, and who displayed so touching a confidence in God; but not the less was there a desire felt to save the Church too. People shuddered at the thought of the consequences that might follow equally the triumph and the punishment of the Reformer. Voices were raised in favour of a reconciliation, and it was suggested that a new attempt should be made to that effect with the Wittemberg doctor. The arch-bishop-elect of Maintz himself, the young and sumptuous Albert, more devout than courageous,³ says Pallavicini, had become alarmed on seeing the interest shown by the people and the nobility, in favour of the Saxon monk. His chaplain, Capito, who during his residence at Basel, had lived on friendly terms with the evangelical priest at Zurich, called Zwingle, a man undaunted in the defence of the

¹ Es wäre sin Aufruhr daraus worden, says Luther.

² Carlo si excusò di non poter procedere piu oltre, rispetto al salvo condotto, ma la Verità fu che conoscendo che il Papa temeva molto di questa doctrina di Luthero, lo volle tenere con questo freno. (Vettori, istoria d'Italia. M. S. C. Biblioth. Corsini at Rome, extracted by Ranke.)

³ Qui pio magis animo erat quam forti. (Pallavicini, p. 118.)

truth, whom we have already had occasion to mention, no doubt had likewise pressed the justice of the Reformer's cause upon Albert. The worldly archbishop had one of those returns to Christian sentiments which are to be observed at times in his life, and consented to go to the emperor and ask him to permit a last effort to be made. But Charles absolutely refused. On Monday, April 22d, the princes went to him in a body to renew Albert's solicitations. "I will not depart from what I have determined," replied the emperor. "I will commission no one to go to Luther officially. But," added he, greatly to the offence of Alexander, "I allow the man three days to reflect; during that time, each may, on his own account, make such exhortations to him as the case requires."¹ This was all that was wanted. The Reformer, it was thought, though fevered by the solemnity of his public appearance, will yield in a conference of a more friendly kind, so that possibly he may be rescued from the abyss into which he is about to fall.

The elector of Saxony knew the contrary; and accordingly he was filled with alarm. "Were it in my power," he wrote on the day following to his brother, duke John, "I should be ready to support Luther. You cannot imagine how the partisans of Rome are attacking me. Could I tell you all, you would hear wonders."² They are bent on destroying him, and the moment any one shows any interest in preserving him, he is forthwith cried down as an heretic. May God, who does not abandon the cause of righteousness, bring matters to a good end!" Frederick, while he made no display of the warm affection which he bore to the Reformer, was contented with not allowing a single movement of his to escape his own observation.

It was not thus with the men of every rank who were then to be found at Worms. They fearlessly declared their sympathy; so much so, that from the Friday's sitting, a crowd of princes, counts, barons, knights, gentlemen, clergymen, laity, and common people surrounded the Reformer's hotel, going in, coming out, and never thinking that they had seen enough of him.³ He had become the man of Germany, and those even

¹ Quibus privatim exhortari hominem possent. (Pallavicini, i. p. 119.)

² Wander hören werden. (Seckend. : 65.)

³ Und konnten nicht satt werden ihn zu sehen. (L. Opp. xvii. p. 581.)

who considered him to be unquestionably in error, were affected with that nobleness of soul which led him to sacrifice his life to the voice of his conscience. With several of the personages then at Worms, men who were considered the choice of the nation, Luther held conversations seasoned with the salt that accompanied all that he said. No one could leave him without glowing with a generous enthusiasm for the truth. "How many things I shall have to tell you!" wrote the private secretary of the margrave Casimir of Brandenburg, George Vogler, to one of his friends. "How many conversations full of godliness and kindness Luther has had with me, and with others! What an agreeable person he is!"¹

One day a young prince of seventeen years of age, came prancing into the court of the hotel; it was Philip, who had now for two years been reigning over Hesse. The young margrave was of a prompt and enterprising character, of a wisdom beyond his years, of a warlike and impetuous disposition, and liked to regulate his conduct by his own ideas. He had been struck with Luther's speech, and wanted to have a nearer view of him. "But he was not yet on my side," said Luther, while relating this.² He leapt from his saddle, went up without farther ceremony to Luther's room, and apostrophising him, said, "Well, dear doctor, how go matters now?"—"Gracious lord!" replied Luther, "I hope they will go on well."—"From what I hear," said the margrave, laughing, "you teach, doctor, that a woman may leave her husband and take another when the first is thought too old!" The imperial court people had been telling the landgrave this nonsense; and, indeed, the enemies of the truth are never at a loss for fables to circulate about the pretended instructions of Christian doctors.—"No, my lord," replied Luther seriously; "let not your highness talk thus, I pray you!" Thereupon the prince frankly held out his hand to the doctor, grasped his cordially, and said: "Dear doctor, if you be in the right, God help you!" . . . He then left the room, again mounted his horse, and set off. This was the first interview of these two men who were afterwards to take the lead in the Re-

¹ Wie eine holdselige Person er is. (Meuzel. Magaz. i. p. 207.)

² War noch nicht auf meiner Seite. (L. Opp. xvii. p. 589.)



LEONARD DE SORDANI

formation, and to defend it, the one with the sword of the Word, the other with that of kings.

The person who, by permission from Charles V., undertook the office of mediator, was Richard of Greifenklau, archbishop of Treves. At once on intimate terms with the elector of Saxony and a good Roman Catholic, Richard wished, by bringing this difficult affair to a settlement, to do a service both to his friend and to the Church. On Monday evening, April 22d, just as Luther was about to sit down to supper, a messenger from the archbishop came to tell him that that prelate desired to see him on the day after to-morrow, being Wednesday, at six in the morning.

XI. The chaplain and Sturm, the imperial usher, were with Luther on that day before six. But previous to that, at four o'clock, Aleander had sent for Cochläus to come to him. The nuncio was not long of discovering that the man whom Capito had introduced to him, was a devoted servant of the court of Rome, on whom he could rely as surely as on himself. Unable to be present at the interview himself, Aleander wished to have a substitute in his place. "Be you at the archbishop of Treves's," said he to the dean of Frankfort: "avoid having any discussion with Luther, but be content with listening attentively to all that shall be said, so that you may be able to give me a faithful report of it."^{1 2} The Reformer arrived at the archbishop's along with some friends, and found the prelate surrounded with the margrave, Joachim of Brandenburg, the bishops of Brandenburg and Augsburg, some nobles, deputies from the free cities, jurisconsults, and theologians, among which last were Cochläus and Jerome Wehe, chancellor of Baden. The latter, a skilful lawyer, wanted a reformation in manners and discipline; he even went farther: "The word of God," he would say, "after being so long hidden under a

¹ Aleander, mane hora quarta vocaverit ad se Cochläum jubens ut . . . adiret solum. . . . (Cochläus, p. 36.)

² Mark here the cunning of Rome: quietly spying out all that is done and said by others, in order to take its own measures more surely, and, meanwhile, not divulging its own private thoughts, as almost always happens with open-hearted persons. For this probably Aleander's absence and the pretended obstacles that obliged him to send another in his place, were designed. Such was then and is still the policy of the Roman court, in order that every thing may be well prepared beforehand for the full execution of whatever has been previously intended. L. R.

bushel, must re-appear in all its lustre.”¹ It was this conciliatory person who was charged with conducting the conference. Turning with a kind expression to Luther, he said: “You have not been sent for that we might enter into a discussion with you, but that we might address you in the language of brotherly affection. You know how carefully Scripture bids us beware of *the arrow that flieth and of the demon of the noon day*. That enemy of mankind has incited you to publish things contrary to religion. Look to your own salvation and that of the empire. Beware lest those whom Jesus Christ hath redeemed by his death from death everlasting, be seduced by you and perish for ever. . . . Do not set yourself against the holy councils. If we do not maintain what our fathers have decreed, there will be nothing but confusion in the Church. The eminent princes who hear me, take a particular interest in your preservation, but should you persist, the emperor will then banish you from the empire,² and no part of the world will have an asylum to offer you. . . . Reflect then on the doom that awaits you!”

“Most clement and illustrious princes and lords,” replied Luther, “I return you most humble thanks for that most clement and kind good will which has suggested this admonition. For I acknowledge myself to be a petty person, much too worthless to be admonished by such princes.”³ He then continued: “I have not found fault with all the councils, but only with that of Constance, because, in condemning that doctrine of John Huss: *That the Church of Christ is the universal body of the predestined to salvation*,⁴ it condemned the article of our creed which says, *I believe in the holy universal Church*, and the Word of God itself.” “My instructions, it is said, give offence,” he added. “I reply, that the gospel of Christ cannot be preached without giving offence. How then should this dread, or apprehension of danger, detach me from the Lord and from that divine Word which is the only truth? . . . No, rather give up my body, my blood, my life!” . . .

¹ Dass das Wort Gottes, welches so lange unter dem Scheffel verborgen gesteckt, heller scheine . . . (Seckend. 364.)

² Und aus dem Reich verstossen. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 582, Sleidan, i. p. 97.,

³ Agnosco enim me homuncionem, longe viliorum esse, quam ut a tantis principibus . . . (L. Opp. lat. p. 167.)

⁴ Ecclesia Christi est universitas prædestinatorum. (Ibid.)

Luther then withdrew, while the princes and doctors were deliberating; after which Luther was called back, and Wehe mildly rejoined: "The powers that be must be honoured even when they err, and great sacrifices must be made to charity." He then said in a more urgent tone, "Commit yourself to the emperor's judgment, and don't be afraid."

LUTHER.—"I most heartily consent to my books being examined and judged by the emperor, the princes, and even by the meanest Christians; but upon one condition, namely, that they take the Word of God for their rule. Men have nothing to do but to obey it. My conscience hangs upon it, and I am a prisoner in its absolute power."^{1 2}

THE ELECTOR OF BRANDENBURG.—"If I rightly understand you, Mr. Doctor, you do not wish to acknowledge any authority but that of holy Scripture?"

LUTHER.—"Yes, my Lord, precisely so. Yea, I abide by that."³

Thereupon the princes and the doctors withdrew; but the excellent archbishop of Treves could not make up his mind to relinquish what he had undertaken. "Come," said he to Luther, as he conducted him into his private apartment, and at the same time ordered John Von Eck and Cochläus on the one side, and Schurff and Amsdorff on the other, to follow them. "Why be

¹ Sie wollten sein Gewissen, dass mit Gottes Wort und Heiliger Schrift gebunden und gefangen wäre, nicht dringen. (Math. p. 27.)

² Here we see what was meant when the Reformers appealed to the Word of God as the sole standard of their faith. With them this implied nothing but to *obey* that Word; their *consciences* were held bound thereto. Where this, as was the case with them, is no mere pretence, but an actual honest certainty, there is no cause to fear that the declarations and contents of that Word will prove very divergent:—then it is no dead judge who cannot speak or make himself understood, as the papists pretend, then it is quick and powerful and speaks to the mind. With such, in regard to those things for which it has been really sent, it speaks the same language throughout, as may be seen in the remarkable agreement among the Reformers concerning the chief points of doctrine, and especially with regard to justification by grace. Granting that some difference of sentiment remains, that may also be found in the Romish church on those points which, as is alleged, have not been determined by the Church: here too, then, these differences are to be found in matters of minor consequence: and if, nevertheless, they (the Reformers) are to be blamed in this respect, it can justly be so only in that, with regard to some at least, they have not been sufficiently tolerant towards each other, but not in that they could not have had any complete assurance in what is necessary for salvation; as little as this charge would be well founded with respect to the creed of Romanists, because the pope has left some points undetermined. Most unfair is it, also, to appeal to the dissensions which are to be found among later Protestants, and particularly those of the present day, where among these, appealing to God's Word is a mere pretence, as appears from their whole light treatment of the same.—L. R

³ Ja darauf stehe Ich. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 588.)

always appealing to holy Scripture?" said Eck warmly; "it is from that quarter that all heresies have proceeded." But Luther, says his friend Mathesius, remained immovable as a rock reposing on the true rock, the Word of the Lord. "The pope," he replied, "is not at all judge in the things of the Word of God. Every Christian ought himself to see and comprehend how he ought to live and die."¹ The parties then separated. The partisans of the popedom were sensible of Luther's superiority, and ascribed it to there being no one present who was capable of replying to him. "Had the emperor acted wisely," said Cochläus, "in summoning Luther to Worms, he would have called thither theologians also who might have refuted his errors."

The archbishop of Treves repaired to the Diet and announced the small success that had attended his mediation. The youthful emperor's astonishment was equalled only by his indignation. "It is high time," said he, "that this affair were brought to a close." The archbishop begged that two days more might be granted; the whole Diet joined in this request; and Charles consented. Aleander bitterly complained.²

Whilst these things were taking place at the Diet, Cochläus was burning with eagerness to carry off the victory which had been denied to prelates and to kings. Although he had allowed a few words to escape him from time to time at the archbishop's, he had been restrained by the injunction that had been laid upon him by Aleander, not to interfere. He was resolved to indemnify himself, and had hardly concluded his report of what had taken place to the papal nuncio when he went to see Luther. Addressing him as a friend, he told him how much vexation he had felt on hearing of the emperor's resolution. After dinner the conversation became more animated.³ Cochläus urged Luther to retract. The latter intimated by a sign that he could not. Several noblemen who happened to be at the table, could hardly restrain themselves under their feelings of indignation at the partisans of Rome wishing, not to convince the Reformer by Scripture, but to coerce him by force. "Very well," says Cochläus to Luther, losing patience at their reproaches,

¹ Ein Christenmensch muss zuschuen und richten. (L. Epp. i. p. 604.)

² De eis Aleander acerrime conquestus est. (Pallavicini, i. p. 120.)

³ Pernactio prandio. (Cochläus, p. 36.)

"I offer to dispute with you in public, if you will renounce your safe-conduct."¹ Now, all that Luther called for was a public disputation. What, then, was he to do? To renounce the safe-conduct was to destroy himself; to refuse the defiance of Cochläus, was to seem as if he doubted the truth of his own cause. The guests perceived in this challenge a treacherous artifice concerted with Aleander, whom the dean of Frankfort had just left, and Vollrat of Watzdorff, who was one of them, disembarrassed Luther of so difficult an alternative. Indignant at a snare set for no other purpose but that of delivering Luther into the hands of the public executioner,² this nobleman, being of a fiery temperament, rose impetuously, seized the terrified priest and pushed him out of the room, so fiercely that blood would have flowed but for the interference of the other guests in behalf of the terror-struck Cochläus, who fled in confusion till he was far from the hotel of the knights of Rhodes.³ No doubt it was in the heat of discussion that the (offensive) expression had escaped the dean, and no such design had been preconcerted by Aleander and him to entrap Luther so insidiously, for Cochläus denies it, and we feel a pleasure in giving credit to his testimony. Nevertheless, he had come from a conference with the nuncio when he waited upon Luther.

In the evening the archbishop assembled at supper those who had been present at the conference in the morning, thinking that this might prove a means of enlarging men's minds and reconciling them to each other. Dauntless and resolute as he was in the presence of arbiters and judges, Luther displayed a good humour and a cheerfulness that led people to expect all that they could wish from him. The archbishop's chancellor, notwithstanding the stiffness he had exhibited in his official character, lent himself to this experiment, and towards the close of the entertainment, proposed that they should drink Luther's health. The latter prepared to return the compliment; he had filled his glass, and according to the custom of that time, was marking it with the sign of the cross, when all at once it flew

¹ Und wollte mit mir disputiren, ich sollte allein das Geleit aufsagen. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 589.)

² Atque ita traderent eum carnificinæ. (Cochläus, p. 36.)

³ Das Ihm das Blut über den Kopf gelaufen wäre, wo man nicht gewehret hätte. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 589.)

into pieces, spilling the wine on the table. The guests were in consternation. "There must have been poison there,"¹ said some of Luther's friends aloud. But the doctor, without being in the least discomposed, replied with a smile: "My dear Sirs, either this wine was never destined for me, or it would have hurt me. The glass doubtless has gone to shivers, in consequence of having been plunged too soon into cold water, when it was washed." These simple words, uttered in such circumstances, have something great in them, and give evidence of a peace of mind that nothing could disturb. It is not to be supposed that the Roman Catholics could have wished to poison Luther, especially in the house of the archbishop of Treves. The entertainment neither alienated nor reconciled the parties; the Reformer's resolution was not to be influenced either by the favour or the hatred of men; it had a higher source.

On Thursday morning, April 20th, the chancellor Wehe, and Dr. Peutinger of Augsburg, the imperial counsellor, who had shown much affection for Luther ever since his interview with de Vio, called at the hotel of the knights of Rhodes. The elector of Saxony sent Frederick of Thun, and another of his counsellors, to be present at the conference. "Commit yourself in this matter to us," said Wehe and Peutinger with much feeling, for they would willingly have sacrificed everything to prevent the division which was about to rend the Church asunder. "This business will end in a Christian way; we assure you that it will."—"You have my answer in two words," said Luther. "I consent to renounce my safe-conduct."² Into the emperor's hands I commit my person and my life, but the Word of God . . . never!" Frederick of Thun then rose with emotion and said to the envoys: "Is not this enough? Is not the sacrifice great enough?" whereupon he went out, declaring that he did not want to hear more. Wehe and Peutinger, hoping to come to better terms with the Doctor, then returned to their seats beside him: "Commit yourself in this matter to the Diet," said they—"No," replied Luther, "*for cursed be the man that*

¹ Es müsse Gift darinnen gewesen seyn.—Luther says nothing of this circumstance; but Razeberg, Luther's friend, physician to the elector John Frederick, relates it in a manuscript to be found in the library at Gotha, and says that he had it from an eye-witness.

² Er wollte ehe das Geleit aufsagen . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. 589.)

trusteth in man! (Jeremiah, 17.)” Wehe and Peutingen redoubled their exhortations and importunities; they urged the Reformer in the most pressing manner. Luther, wearied with this, rose and bid them farewell, saying: “I will not allow any man to place himself above the Word of God.”¹—“Take further time for reflection,” said they while retiring, “we shall return in the afternoon.”

They did in fact return; but under the conviction that Luther would not give way, they brought a new proposal with them. Luther had refused to acknowledge (as his judge) first the pope, next the emperor, then the Diet; there still remained a judge whom he had once invoked—namely, a general council. No doubt this was such a proposal as Rome would have met with indignation; but it was the last remaining plank of safety, so the delegates offered it to Luther, and he could have accepted it without binding himself to anything precise.—Whole years must have elapsed before the obstacles that the pope would be sure to oppose to the convocation of a council, could be overcome; and to gain whole years, in the case of the Reformation, was to gain everything. In that event, God and time might be expected to do great things. But Luther before all things desired to be fair and honest; he had no wish to save himself at the expense of truth, even although dissimulation required nothing more than silence.—“I consent to that,” replied he, “but (and this qualification was tantamount to refusing the award of a council) on condition that the council shall judge only according to holy Scripture.”²

Not dreaming that a council could judge otherwise, Peutingen and Wehe ran, quite overjoyed, to the archbishop: “Doctor Martin,” said they to him, “submits his books to a council,” and the archbishop was about to proceed with this good news to the emperor, when some doubts came into his mind; he sent for Luther.

Richard of Greiffenklau was alone when the doctor arrived. “Dear Mr. Doctor,” said the archbishop with much kindness, and more than common favour,³ “my doctors assure me that you con-

¹ Er wollte kurtzrum Menschen über Gottes Wort nicht erkennen. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 583.)

² Dass darüber aus der heiligen Schrift gesprochen. (Ibid. p. 584.)

³ Ganz gut und mehr denn gnädig. (L. Epp. i. p. 604.)

sent to submit your cause unreservedly to a council.”—“My lord,” replied Luther, “I can endure anything, but not the abandonment of Holy Scripture.” The archbishop then perceived that Wehe and Peutingner had misrepresented what he had said. Never could Rome consent to a council which should judge only according to Scripture. “It was,” says Pallavicini, “to desire that a weak eye should read small print and at the same time to refuse the use of spectacles.”^{1 2} The good archbishop heaved a sigh. “It has been well that I sent for you,” said he. “What would have become of me had I gone forthwith, and reported the said news to the emperor?”

Luther’s immovable firmness, his unbending resolution, are no doubt astonishing, but they will be understood and respected by those who know the rightful claims of God. Rarely has there been a nobler testimony borne to the unchangeable Word of heaven; and that at the risk of the liberty and the life of the man who bore it.

“Well then,” said the venerable prelate, “point out a remedy.”

LUTHER, after a short pause. “My lord, I know of none but that of Gamaliel: *If this council, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.* Let the emperor, the electors, the princes, and the states of the empire transmit this answer to the pope!”

ARCHBISHOP.—“Retract some articles at least.”

LUTHER.—“Provided they be not those that were condemned by the council of Constance.”

ARCHBISHOP.—“Ah! Indeed I fear these will be precisely such as will be insisted for.”

LUTHER.—“Then better make a sacrifice of my body and my

¹ Simulque conspiciolorum omnium usum negare. (L. Epp. i. 110.)

² Singular comparison indeed! God’s Word, which must be a *light for our feet, and a lamp to our path*, shall be likened to a book printed for weak eyes, in such small type, that in order to read it, spectacles are necessary. Now what man would be such a fool as to print in so small a type for such an eye, so as that the book by itself should be unreadable? Yet such is the folly with which those persons would charge God, who give out that the Bible is designedly so obscurely written, that it requires some further exposition. Cardinal Pallavicini, and all the other abettors of the Roman see, by such an allegation betray their dread lest the clearness of Holy Scripture should speedily expose the falsehood of their doctrines, and thus endeavour by it to keep the Bible out of men’s hands.—L. R.

life, better allow my arms and legs to be cut off, than abandon the clear and true Word of God."¹

The Archbishop understood Luther at last. "You may withdraw," said he, still with the same mildness.—"My lord," rejoined Luther, "will you be so good as take the necessary steps for my obtaining from his majesty the safe-conduct that will be required for my return?"—"I will see to that," replied the good archbishop, and they parted.

Thus ended these negotiations. The whole empire had turned towards this man² with the most ardent prayers, and the most terrible menaces, and the man had not faltered. His refusal to bend beneath the iron arm of the pope, emancipated the Church, and ushered in a new era. The intervention of Providence was manifest. We have here one of those great scenes in history, over above which the Divinity soars aloft in majestic grandeur.

Luther went out along with Spalatin, who had come in during the conference with the archbishop. The elector of Saxony's counsellor, John von Minkwitz, had fallen sick at Worms, and the two friends now went to inquire for him at his house. Luther addressed the invalid in language of the most affecting consolation. "Farewell," said he on leaving him, "to-morrow I shall leave Worms."

Luther was not mistaken. Within three hours from his return to the hotel of the knights of Rhodes, the chancellor Von Eck, accompanied by the emperor's chancellor and a notary, presented themselves.

The chancellor said to him: "Martin Luther, his imperial majesty, the elector, princes, and states of the empire, having exhorted thee to submission several times, and in several ways, but always in vain, the emperor in his quality of advocate and defender of the catholic faith, finds himself necessitated to proceed. He therefore orders thee to return home within the space of twenty-one days, and forbids thee to trouble the public peace along the road, whether by preaching or by writings."

Luther was well aware that this message was but the commencement of his condemnation. "It has happened as the Lord

¹ Ehe Stumpf und Stiel fahren lassen. . . . (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 584.)

² Totum imperium ad se conversum spectabat. (Pallavicini, i. p. 120.)

hath pleased," he mildly replied, "blessed be the name of the Lord." He then added: "First of all, I most humbly, and from the bottom of my heart, thank his majesty, the electors, princes, and other states of the empire, for their having heard me with so much kindness. I have not desired, nor do I now desire more than one thing, a reformation of the Church according to Holy Scripture. I am ready to do all, and to suffer all, in the way of humble submission to the emperor. Life and death, honour and disgrace, all is the same to me; I make but one reservation: the preaching of the Gospel; for, says St. Paul, *the Word is not bound.*" The deputies then withdrew.

On Friday, the 26th of April, in the morning, the Reformer's friends and several noblemen met at Luther's quarters.¹ It gave them pleasure to see in the Christian constancy he had opposed to Charles and to the empire, the celebrated portrait of antiquity realised:

Justum et tenacem propositi virum
Non civium ardor, prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni
Mente quatit solida.² . . .

They wished once more, and possibly for the last time, to bid adieu to this intrepid monk. Luther provided a modest repast. And now he had to take leave of his friends, and to fly to a distance from them, under a sky surcharged with storms. That solemn moment he desired to pass in the presence of God. He lifted his soul to him. He blessed those who surrounded him.³ Ten o'clock struck, and Luther left the hotel with the friends who had accompanied him to Worms. Twenty *gentils-hommes*⁴ on horseback surrounded his carriage, a great crowd of people accompanied him beyond the walls of the city. The imperial

¹ Salutatis patronis et amicis qui eum frequentissime convenerunt. . . . (L. Opp. lat. ii. p. 168.)

² Horat. Od. lib. iii. 3. Which may be rendered this:

The just, the firm, unshaken stands
Before the mob's unjust commands;
The tyrant's looks, when fiercest, prove
Powerless his steadfast soul to move. TR.

³ Seine Freunde geseget. (Mathesius, p. 27.)

⁴ The term *gentils-hommes* is not translatable into our language, our nobility not forming a separate caste as under the old *regime* in France, and to this day in Germany. I presume M. Merle d'Aubigné means men of noble blood, though the *Acta Doctoris M. Lutheri Wormatiæ habita* do not specify the rank of the friends who accompanied Luther on leaving that city. TR.

usher, Sturm, rejoined him sometime after at Oppenheim, and they arrived on the day following at Frankfort.

XIII. Thus did Luther escape from the walls of Worms, when they seemed likely to become his tomb. His whole heart gave glory to God. "The devil himself," said he, "was guarding the pope's citadel; but Christ has made a large breach in it, and Satan has been obliged to confess that the Lord is more powerful than he?"¹

"The day of the Diet of Worms," says the godly Mathesius, Luther's disciple and friend, "is one of the greatest and most glorious days bestowed upon the earth until the end of the world."² The combat fought at Worms was heard afar, and at the noise that was made about it throughout all Christendom, from the regions of the North to the mountains of Switzerland, and the cities of England, France, and Italy, many seized with ardour the potent arms of the Word of God.

Luther, after arriving at Frankfort on Saturday evening, April 27th, on the day following took advantage of a few moments of liberty, the first he had enjoyed for a long while, to write a note remarkable at once for homeliness and energy, to his friend Lucas Cranach, the celebrated painter at Wittenberg. "Your servant, Godsire Lucas," says he, "I thought that his majesty would have assembled some fifty doctors at Worms that the monk might be fairly convicted of error. But nothing of the kind.—Are these books thine?—Yea.—Do you choose to recall them?—Nay.—Well then! go about your business!—Such is the whole story. O blinded Germans, how like children do we act, and allow ourselves to be outwitted and duped by Rome!

. . . The Jews must once more be allowed to chant Yo! Yo! Yo! But Easter will come round for us also; and then we shall sing: Alleluiah!³ . . . We must be quiet and suffer for a little while. *In a little while, ye shall not see me: and again a little while ye shall see me;* said Jesus Christ, (John xvi. 16.) I hope that it will be the same with me. Adieu. I com-

¹ Aber Christus macht ein Loch herein. (L. Opp. (L.) xvii. p. 589.)

² Diss ist der herrlichen grossen Tag einer vorm Ende der Welt. (p. 28.)

³ Es müssen die Juden einmal singen: Jo, Jo, Jo! . . . (L. Epp. i. 589) These shouts of joy, uttered by the Jews at the time of the crucifixion, represent the triumphant shouts of the partisans of the popedom on the occasion of the catastrophe which was about to burst upon Luther. But the Reformer descried in the future the hallelujah of his deliverance.

mend you all to the Lord. May he preserve in Christ your mind and faith against the assaults of the wolves and dragons of Rome. Amen!"

After writing this somewhat enigmatical letter, as time was pressing, Luther straightway set off for Friedberg, which lies six leagues from Frankfort. On the day following, Luther collected his thoughts anew, and wished once more to write to Charles, in whose regards he was unwilling to be confounded with guilty rebels. In his letter to the emperor, he clearly explains what the obedience is that we owe to kings, and what we owe to God, together with the boundary line at which the one must give place to the other. One involuntarily recalls, in reading Luther, that saying of the greatest autocrat of modern times: "My domination ends where that of conscience begins."¹

"God, the searcher of hearts, is my witness," said Luther, "that I am ready eagerly to obey your majesty, whether it be in glory or in disgrace, whether by life or by death, and absolutely, excepting nothing but the Word of God, by which man liveth. In all the affairs of the present life, my loyalty shall be immovable, for loss or gain here are matters of indifference in regard to salvation. But it is not the will of God, that where eternal interests are at stake, man should be subject to man. Submission in things spiritual, implies the worship which ought to be rendered to the Creator alone."²

Luther wrote also, but in German, to the states of the empire, and his letter to them is of nearly the same purport with that to the emperor. He recounted in it all that had taken place at Worms. Many copies were taken and disseminated throughout all Germany; everywhere, said Cochläus, it excited the indignation of the inhabitants against the emperor and the higher clergy.³

Early next morning Luther sent a note to Spalatin, enclosing both the letters that he had written the night before; he sent

¹ Napoleon, to the Protestant deputation on his accession to the empire.

² *Nam ea fides et submitio proprie est vera illa latría et adoratio Dei . . .* (L. Epp. i. p. 592.)

³ *Per chalcographos multiplicata et in populos dispersa est ea epistola . . . Cæsari autem et clericis odium populare, etc.* (Cochläus, p. 38.) It would appear that to increase the interest attached to these letters, this multiplication was effected by etchings—probably fac-similes—engravers (chalcographi) having been employed. Tr.

back to Worms the usher, Sturm, who had been gained over to the cause of the Gospel, and after embracing him, set off in all haste for Grunberg.

On Tuesday, while still two leagues from Hirschfield, he met the chancellor of the prince—abbot of that town, on his way to receive him. Soon there appeared a troop of horse with the abbot at their head. The latter sprang from his horse; Luther alighted from his car; and after an interchange of greetings, they entered Hirschfield. The senate received them at the city gates.¹ The princes of the church ran to meet a monk who was cursed by the pope, and the leading men among the people bowed respectfully to a man who lay under the ban of the emperor.

“By five o’clock to-morrow morning we shall be at church,” said the prince, as he rose that evening from the table to which he had invited the Reformer. He would have him occupy his own bed. Luther preached next day, and the prince and his train attended.²

Luther that evening reached the scene of his boyhood, Isenac. There all his friends came about him, urging him to preach, and on the day following, they conducted him to the church. The parish priest then made his appearance, accompanied by a notary and witnesses: he stepped forward trembling all over, distracted by the dread of losing his place on the one hand, and that of opposing the powerful man who stood before him on the other. “I protest against the liberty you are about to take,” at last said the priest in a tone of embarrassment. Luther went into the pulpit, and soon the same voice, which three and twenty years before, used to sing through the streets of that town for a bit of bread, made the vaulted roofs of its ancient church resound with those accents which were beginning to agitate the world. After sermon the priest stepped up to Luther in confusion. The notary had drawn up the act; the witnesses had signed it; all was duly done to prevent the priest from losing his place. “Forgive me,”

¹ *Senatus intra portas nos excepit.* (L. Epp. ii. p. 6.)

² Luther, as quoted by M. Michelet, says that on this occasion he was splendidly entertained in the monastery—that the abbot actually gave up his own bed to him—that he (Luther) warned them of what might be the consequences of their getting him to preach, but that he had never consented that the word of God should be bound. TR.

said he to the Doctor humbly, "I have done this from dread of the tyrants who are now oppressing the church."¹

In truth there was good ground for fear. The face of things had changed at Worms, and Aleander seemed now to have all his own way there. "Luther has to look for nothing short of banishment," Frederick wrote to duke John. "Nothing can save him. If God permit my return to you, I will have incredible things to tell you. Not only Annas and Caiaphas, but Pilate and Herod, have combined against him." As Frederick cared little about remaining longer at Worms, he left the place, and was followed by the elector palatine, and the elector archbishop of Cologne. Princes of less elevated rank followed their example. Judging it impossible to avert the blow that was about to be struck, they preferred, improperly perhaps, to abandon the place, leaving none behind but Spaniards, Italians, and the most ultramontane of the German princes.

The field was now clear, and Aleander could walk the course. He presented to Charles the draught of an edict, designed as a model for what the Diet ought to issue against the monk, and in this case the nuncio's labours pleased the angry emperor. He convened the remaining members of the Diet in his chamber, and made Aleander's edict be read over to them; all then present, Pallavicini positively states, accepted it.

On the day following, which was a high holiday, the emperor attended church, surrounded by his court, and when the religious solemnities were over, in the presence of a vast multitude thronging the sanctuary, Aleander, invested with all the ensigns of his dignity, went up to Charles V.² He bore in his hand two copies of the edict against Luther, the one in Latin, the other in German, and prostrating himself before the imperial majesty, he besought Charles to attach to these his signature, and the seal of the empire. It was at the moment when the sacrifice (of the Mass) was offered, when incense filled the temple, while the chanting still resounded along its vaulted roofs, and as it were in the very presence of the Divinity, that the destruction of the enemy of Rome was to be signed. The emperor,

¹ Humiliter tamen excusante . . . ob metum tyrannorum suorum. (L. Epp. ii. p. 6.)

² Cum Cæsar in templo adesset . . . processit illi obviam Aleander. (Pallav. i. p. 122.)

with a most holiday expression,¹ took the pen and signed it, and Aleander went out exulting, gave the decree to be printed, and sent it abroad over all Christendom.² This result of Rome's labours had cost the popedom some trouble. Pallavicini himself tells us, that though bearing the date of May 8th, it was signed later, but was ante-dated for the purpose of producing the belief that it was referable to a time when all the members of the diet were still assembled.

"We Charles V.," said the emperor (then followed his titles), "to all the electors, princes, prelates, and others whom it concerns.

"The Almighty having confided to us, for the defence of his holy faith, more kingdoms, and greater might than he has ever bestowed on any of our predecessors, we mean to employ all our powers in preventing any heresy from defiling our holy empire.

"The Augustinian monk, Martin Luther, albeit exhorted by us, has rushed like a madman against holy Church, and has set himself to stifle it with books that are full of blasphemies. He has, in a disgraceful manner, defiled the indestructible law of holy matrimony; he has endeavoured to excite the laity to imbrue their hands in the blood of the priests,³ and, subverting all subordination, he has never ceased to excite men to revolt, division, war, murder, theft, fire-raising, and to labour to accomplish the utter ruin of the faith of Christians. . . . In a word, and to say nothing of other malicious acts, this being, who is not a man so much as the evil fiend in human form, concealed under a monk's hood,⁴ has collected together, in one putrid slough, all the most sinful heresies of times gone by, and to these has added new ones of his own. . . .

"Accordingly, we have dismissed from our presence this Luther, whom all pious and sensible men hold to be a fool, or one possessed by the devil; and our intention is, that on the expiration of his safe-conduct, recourse shall be had to the most effectual means for arresting his furious madness.

"Therefore it is, that under pain of incurring the punishments due to crimes of leze-majesty, we forbid you to give shelter to

¹ Festivissimo vultu. (Pallav. i. p. 122.) ² Et undique pervulgata. (Ibid.)

³ Ihre Hände in der Priester Blut zu waschen. (L. Opp. (L.) xvi. p. 398.)

⁴ Nicht ein Mensch, sondern als der böse Feind in Gestalt eines Menschen mit angenommener Mönchskutten. . . . (Ibid.)

the said Luther, from the time that the fatal term be expired, to conceal him, give him food or drink, or furnish him, by word or deed¹, openly or secretly, with any kind of succour. We further enjoin you to seize him, or cause him to be seized, wherever he may be found, and to bring him to us without any delay, or to retain him in sure custody, until you shall have learnt from us how you ought to act in regard to him, and until you shall have received the reward due to your exertions in so holy a cause.

“As for his adherents, you will apprehend them, suppress down and confiscate their property.

“As for his writings, if even the best food becomes an object of abhorrence to all men from the moment that a drop of poison is mingled with it, how much more ought such books, in which a deadly poison for the soul is to be found, to be not only rejected, but, further, destroyed! You will therefore burn them, or utterly destroy them in some other way.

“As for the authors, poets, printers, painters, sellers or purchasers of handbills, tracts, or pictures against the pope and against the Church, you will seize them, body and goods, and treat them as you deem fit.

“And should any one, whatever be his dignity, dare to act contrary to this decree of our imperial majesty, we ordain that he be put to the ban of the empire.

“Let every one conduct himself as above enjoined.”¹

¹ This imperial ban, drawn up in the name of the emperor, but the production apparently of the pen of cardinal Aleander, is a worthy monument of the spirit of Rome, as it has exhibited itself against the Reformation from its very earliest commencement, and which may serve as a warning to us also. There are three things to be specially remarked in it. First, That no lying and slander is too base, if only men's minds can thereby be stirred up against the Reformation, for where did the misdeeds ever appear of which Luther is here accused? And what was that collection of heresies deserving punishment, which made him resemble Satan in human form? Secondly, That it leaves no means untried that can infuse bitter hatred and blood-thirstiness, in order that the truth, and all who are attached to it, may be destroyed from the earth: and, lastly, That it seeks to rule by blind prejudice, and therefore it endeavours to make all inquiry impossible, by destroying those writings which might serve to open people's eyes. It is the very same spirit which even now displays itself, in the slanders that men anew more and more make bold to throw out against the Reformation and the Reformers; in the bitterness manifested against all attempts that are put forth for the propagation of the truth; and in the anxiety that is shown to hinder the free examination of the truth and the unfettered examination of the very Bible. It is well for us to be on our guard: for were this spirit, which people begin to show more and more in their operations, to gain the mastery, we may look for such another imperial ban being issued for the destruction of all Protestants, and for the absolute slavish subjection even of all sincere Roman catholics!—L. R.

Such was the edict that was signed in the cathedral at Worms. It was more than a bull from Rome which, although published in Italy, might be denied execution in Germany. Here the emperor himself had spoken, and the Diet had ratified his decree.¹

¹ Far from there being anything extraordinary in this imperial ban, the following notices will show that the emperor and Diet did no more by it than comply with the requirements of the decrees of councils and of popes, &c., authorities which neither had renounced, and with the constitutions of former emperors.

The third general council of Lateran under Alexander III., the fourth general council of Lateran under Innocent III., and the general council of Constance decree that the goods of heretics, if laymen, shall be confiscated—that the temporal lords, on being required by the ecclesiastical authorities “shall within their jurisdictions, without delay, imprison heretics, and cause them to be kept in close custody by putting them into fetters and iron chains, till the Church hath passed sentence on them”—they decree that the secular powers, what offices soever they enjoy, shall be admonished and, if need be, compelled by ecclesiastical censure, that as they desire to be reputed Christians, so they will take an oath for the defence of the faith, and that they will honestly endeavour with their whole power, to exterminate all heretics, condemned by the Church, out of their territories.”

The general council of Constance requires all archbishops, bishops, and other persons chosen for this work, to admonish and require all kings, emperors, dukes, princes, &c., and by the apostolical authority to command them, to expel all heretics forementioned out of their kingdoms, provinces, cities, towns, castles, villages, territories, and other places; according to the canon of the Lateran council, beginning with the words *Sicut ait*, that is, according to the 27th canon of the third general council of the Lateran, which under anathema forbids any one to let the heretics there mentioned, tarry within their houses or territories.

The fourth council of Lateran adds that, “if the temporal lord, being required and admonished by the Church, shall neglect to purge his territories from heretical filth he shall be excommunicated by the metropolitan and his suffragans; and if he neglect to give satisfaction within a year, this shall be signified to the pope, that he, from henceforth, may pronounce his subjects discharged from their obedience, and expose his territories to be enjoyed by Catholics, who having exterminated the heretics, shall possess it without any contradiction, so that no injury be done to the principal lord who doth not oppose his procedure; provided notwithstanding, that the same law take place against those who have no temporal lords.”

To the above quotations, which might be greatly multiplied, my authority adds: “Now let it be observed, that both the councils of Constance and of Basel do reckon this Lateran among those councils which all their popes must swear to maintain to the least tittle, and to defend even to blood, and that the council of Trent not only hath declared it to be a general council, but also doth affirm one of its definitions to be the voice of the whole Church, and therefore these three councils must be supposed to approve all that is cited from this council.” The council of Bourges, approved by the general council of Basel, declares “that war may justly be waged against condemned heretics, and that princes and Christian people may be animated to fight against them.”

The fourth general council of Latern decrees that “they who under the badge of the cross will set themselves to exterminate heretics, shall have full remission of all their sins which they confess, and for which they have been contrite, and a greater degree of everlasting happiness than others may expect.” Can. 3.

By the constitutions of Innocent VIII. “All magistrates, under the penalty of excommunication, must execute the penalties imposed on heretics by the inquisitors, without revising the justice of them, because heresy is a crime merely ecclesiastical.” Const. 10. Bull. Rom. To. i. p. 453. See “A Discourse concerning the Laws of the Church of Rome made against Heretics,” referred

All the partisans of Rome now raised a shout of triumph. "It is the end of the tragedy," they exclaimed, "As for me," said Alphonso Valdez, a Spaniard at Charles's court, "I am convinced that it is not the end but the commencement."¹ Valdez perceived that the movement ran through the Church, the people, the age, and that although Luther might fall, his cause would not fall along with him. But yet no one could hide from himself the imminent—the inevitable danger to which the Reformer himself now stood exposed; and the great mass of the superstitious were horrified to think of this incarnate Satan, whom the emperor had pointed out to the whole nation as going about in the disguise of a monk.

The man against whom the mighty ones of the earth were forging their thunder-bolts, had now left the Church at Isenac, and was preparing to take leave of some of his dearest friends. He did not like the road leading to Gotha and Erfurt, but preferred going to the village of Mora, from which his father originally came, there once more to see his grandmother, who died four months after, and to visit his uncle, Henry Luther, and other relations. Schurff, Jonas, and Suavea set off for Wittenberg; Luther stepped into his car along with Amsdorff, who remained with him, and they accompanied each other through the forests of Thuringia.²

That same evening he arrived at the village of his fathers. His poor old grandmother clasped in her arms the grandson who had made head against the emperor Charles and pope Leo. Luther spent the next day with the family; glad after the turmoil he had passed through at Worms, to enjoy such delightful tranquillity. On the day following he resumed his journey, accompanied by Amsdorff and his brother James. It was amid these solitudes that the Reformer's doom was to be decided. They were skirting the Thuringian woods and following the road

to in a former Note. One of the most revolting consequences of this frightful and bloody despotism was, that in Spain the king was bound to be present at the burning of condemned heretics. On the 30th of June 1680, a great *auto da fe* took place at Madrid, in presence of the king and queen, the chief nobility, and a vast concourse of spectators in holiday attire. The reader will find an affecting description of what then took place in *Memoires de la Cour d'Espagne par Madame d'Aunoy, part ii. p. 51.* Tr.

¹ Non finem sed initium. (P. Martyris, Epp. 132.)

² Ad carnem meam trans sylvam profectus. (L. Epp. ii. p. 7.)

to Walters-hausen. As the car was in a hollow part of the road near the deserted church of Glisboch, at some distance from Altenstein castle, the travellers suddenly heard a noise, and in an instant five horsemen in masks, and armed from head to heel, burst upon them. James, the brother, no sooner saw the assailants, than he leapt from the car, and without uttering a word, ran off as fast as his legs could carry him. The driver wished to defend himself. "Stop," cried one of the unknown with a terrible voice, at the same time throwing himself on him and laying him prostrate.¹ Another of the masked assailants seized Amsdorff and kept him apart, while the remaining three laid hold of Luther in perfect silence. Having dragged him violently out of the car, they threw a cavalry cloak over his shoulders and mounted him on a led horse. The other two now left Amsdorff and the driver; the whole five leapt into their saddles; one dropt his hat but they did not stay even to pick it up again, and in the twinkling of an eye they and their prisoner were lost to view amid the dark foliage of the forest. They first took the direction of Broderode; but soon returned by another way, and without leaving the wood, turned and winded about in all directions, in order to mislead any who might be upon their track.

Little used to riding on horseback, Luther was soon spent with fatigue.² He was allowed to dismount for a few minutes, when he lay down under a beech-tree, and quenched his thirst from an adjacent spring, which to this day, is called *Luther's spring*. His brother James continued his flight until he arrived in the evening at Walters-hausen. The driver, in a great fright, resumed his seat on the car, where Amsdorff had again taken his, and by dint of rapid driving, quickly left the woods far behind, and conducted Luther's friend to Wittemberg. It was soon known at Walters-hausen, Wittemberg, and the intermediate country houses, villages, and towns, that the doctor had been carried off; and this news, much as it delighted some, filled the greater number with astonishment and indignation. A cry of lamentation soon arose from all Germany: "Luther has fallen into the hands of his enemies!"

After the violent conflict which Luther must have undergone,

¹ Dejectoque in solum auriga et verberato. (Pallav. i. p. 122.)

² Longo itinere, novus eques, fessus. (L. Epp. ii. p. 3.)

God desired that he should be conducted into a situation affording him peace and repose. After having placed him on the brilliant theatre of Worms, where all the Reformer's mental energies must have been so greatly excited, he gave him the obscure and humbling retreat of a prison. He draws forth from the deepest privacy the weak instruments by which he means to accomplish the greatest objects, and then, after allowing them for a time to dazzle men's eyes on some bright scene of life, he sends them back into the most profound obscurity. The Reformation was not to be accomplished by violent struggles and pompous exhibitions; it was not thus that the heaven was to penetrate the mass of the people; the Spirit of God must have calmer ways whereby to operate. The man who was ever pitilessly assailing the champions of Rome, was for a time to disappear from the world; that great individuality was to be eclipsed, to prevent the revolution that was about to be accomplished, from bearing the stamp of any individual. It was needful that man should quit the scene, in order that God might remain alone, moving by his Spirit upon the abyss, in which the darkness of the middle ages was in process of being engulfed, and saying, *Let there be light!* in order that there might be light.

Night came on at last, and as it was now impossible for any one to follow the track of Luther's conductors, these took a new direction. About eleven o'clock they reached a steep hill which their horses slowly ascended.¹ It was crowned with an ancient fortress, surrounded on all sides save that on which they approached it, by the dark woods that cover the mountains of Thuringia.

To this lofty and isolated castle, called *the Wartburg*, where landgraves used of old to conceal themselves, they conducted Luther. The bolts were withdrawn, the iron bars fell, the portals were opened, the Reformer crossed the threshold, and the folding gates closed behind him. He dismounted on reaching the castle yard. One of the horsemen, Burkard von Hund, lord of Altenstein, then withdrew; another, John von Berlepsch, provost of the Wartburg, conducted the doctor into the room which was to be his prison, and where he found a knight's habi-

¹ Hora ferme undecima ad mansionem noctis perveni in tenebris. (L. Epp.) ii. p. 3.)

liments and a sword. The three other troopers, acting under the provost's orders, strip him of his clerical dress and equip him in the costume of a knight thus lying ready for him, enjoining him at the same time to allow his beard and hair to grow,¹ in order that no one in the castle even might discover who he was. The people of the Wartburg were to know the prisoner simply by the name of the knight Sir George. In his new dress Luther could hardly recognise himself! At last he was left alone, and his mind could range at will over the astounding events at Worms, the uncertain prospects that lay before him, and his new and strange residence. From the narrow windows of his apartment, he could discover the sombre, solitary, and boundless forests which lay all around.² "There," says Luther's friend and biographer, Mathesius, "the doctor was to remain like St. Paul in his prison at Rome."

Frederick of Thun, Philip Feilitsch, and Spalatin had not concealed from Luther, in the course of a confidential conversation which they had held with him at Worms, in compliance with orders from the elector, that his liberty behoved to be sacrificed to the wrath of Charles and the pope.³ Meanwhile Luther was carried off in so mysterious a manner, that Frederick himself long remained ignorant of the spot at which he was confined.⁴ The friends of the Reformation long mourned his disappearance. Spring went by; summer, autumn, winter followed; the sun

¹ *Exutus vestibus meis et equestribus inductus, comam et barbam nutriens*
 . (L. Epp. ii. p. 7.)

² The whole of Germany, we learn from the earliest writers, was originally one vast forest, called the Hercynian forest. In process of time the country became partially cleared, still, however, leaving large detached tracts of woodland, such as the Black forest, separating Alsace from Suabia, the Steyger in Franconia, the Hartz in Lunenburg, the Thuringer in which Luther was waylaid and confined, &c. &c. Some idea of the vast extent and savage character of these wildernesses may be had from their being described, even in the eighteenth century, as abounding not only in wolves, bears, and wild-boars, but also in wild horses, wild oxen, wild asses, and wild sheep. It is not difficult to account for the existence of such remains of primeval desolation in a country studded with large and thriving cities, when we remember that the nobles and their feudal retainers delighted in the chase, and that the industrial population had every inducement to abandon the country, and congregate and multiply in the towns and cities, where skilled labour was protected from feudal wrong, fostered by admirable municipal regulations, and made the avenue to wealth, respect, and influence. Tr.

³ *Cum ipsa me jamdudum non noverim* (L. Epp. ii. p. 7.)

⁴ According to Maimbourg, it was said that the duke of Saxony had given orders generally that Luther should be put in some secure place, but did not wish to be informed where, in order that he might swear to the emperor that he did not know to what place Luther had betaken himself. Tr.

completed his yearly course, and still the walls of the Wartburg enclosed their prisoner. Truth had been smitten with interdict by the Diet, and her defender, immured in a fortress, disappeared from the scene of the world, without its being known what had become of him; Aleander triumphed, the Reformation seemed lost . . . but God still reigned, and the stroke which seemed likely to annihilate the cause of the Gospel, was only to promote the safety of its courageous minister and the diffusion of the light of the faith far and wide.¹

Let us leave Luther a captive in Germany on the heights of the Wartburg, and see what God was then doing in other countries of Christendom.

¹ Seckend, p. 365.

May 24

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